Amusement TODAY
Your Amusement Industry NEWS Leader
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Amusement Expo International equips, educates in robust out-of-home market

10th edition of annual trade event unfurls its largest show floor yet

AT: *Dean Lamanna*
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The equipment-focused trade show portion of Amusement Expo International takes place at the Las Vegas Convention Center March 27-28. AT/GARY SLADE

LAS VEGAS — Completing its first decade as the premier program for the amusement / coin-op games and family entertainment center (FEC) industry sectors, **Amusement Expo International** (AEI) returns to **Las Vegas Convention Center** and the event's adjacent headquarters, the **Westgate Las Vegas Resort & Casino**, March 26-28.

AEI is a resource for innovative products, service, ideas and information, as well as contacts / networking. It debuted in Las Vegas in 2010 as the combined trade show of the **American Amusement Machine Association** (AAMA) and the **Amusement & Music Operators Association** (AMOA), which co-own the event.

While maintaining its core focus on amusements, the diverse gathering has continued to expand and embrace changes in the location-based entertainment marketplace through the years, with many features introduced since its inception.

In addition to annual colocations with the **National Bulk Vendors Association** and the **Laser Tag Convention**, AEI has placed increasing emphasis on education, the FEC sector and virtual reality (VR). It offers a full day of seminars and two full days of trade exhibition.

Lori Schneider, executive vice president of AMOA, told *Amusement Today* that AEI 2019 "is shaping up to be our most exciting conference and trade show yet. In addition to an education lineup with over 20 sessions, this year's show floor

▸ See EXPO, page 4

The restored carousel and reworked skating "roadway" add beauty to the new revamped Méga Parc. Inset is the park's new mascot, Mega. COURTESY MÉGA PARC

Méga Park sees completion of makeover in Quebec City

AT: *Tim Baldwin*
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QUEBEC CITY, Ontario, Canada — As many consumers turn to online shopping, malls are keeping themselves relevant by offering entertainment, dining and more. Simply put, they are becoming experiences.

Surrounded by 280 stores and 35 restaurants, **Méga Parc** inside **Galeries de la Capitale** has undergone a transformation. Existing since 1988, the amusement center closed in September 2017 for a CAN $52 million renovation. Completely revamped, the all new experience opened on January 18 of this year with several new rides and a new steampunk theme.

"**Revelhouse** designed the park and **Reliance** was the general contractor. Restoration of the four existing rides was completed by the **Quebec Carnival**," said **Sean Michael Suavé**, director, Méga Parc. "The colors from all the lighting and the restoration work on the Carousel are just amazing!"

Among the 18 attractions, the mall retained four rides and nine new ones were installed.

"The retheme took four years from conception to opening, including 16 months of construction," offered Suavé.

The eye-catching icon piece could easily be the 76-foot, hubless wheel supplied by **Larson International**.

"The concept of the hubless, spokeless wheel was developed by Jeff Novotny and Walter Larson as part of the

▸ See MEGA PARK, page 6

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AMUSEMENT VIEWS Page 4
BUSINESS Pages 28-39
PARKS & FAIRS Pages 8-23
SAFETY Pages 40-46
WATER PARKS Pages 24-27
CLASSIFIEDS Page 47

AMUSEMENT VIEWS

***AT* NOTEBOOK:** *John W.C. Robinson, jrobinson@amusementtoday.com*

Staying rooted in the family

Robinson

The amusement industry was founded on family entertainment. With beginnings such as trolley parks, picnic groves, and oceanside boardwalks, amusement parks were rooted in the idea of providing affordable fun for families and guests to enjoy for a day or an evening.

Theme parks and regional amusement parks remain destinations. They're irreplaceable. Yet as their pricing structure increases, the modern Family Entertainment Center (FEC) has stepped up to fill the market for quality fun at an affordable price.

In recent years, large regional theme parks have grown, becoming far more prevalent and the smaller, family amusement parks have slowly disappeared from the entertainment map. In my own hometown, no less than a half-dozen small amusement parks were within a twenty-minute drive of my parents' home in 1980. Now, only one remains.

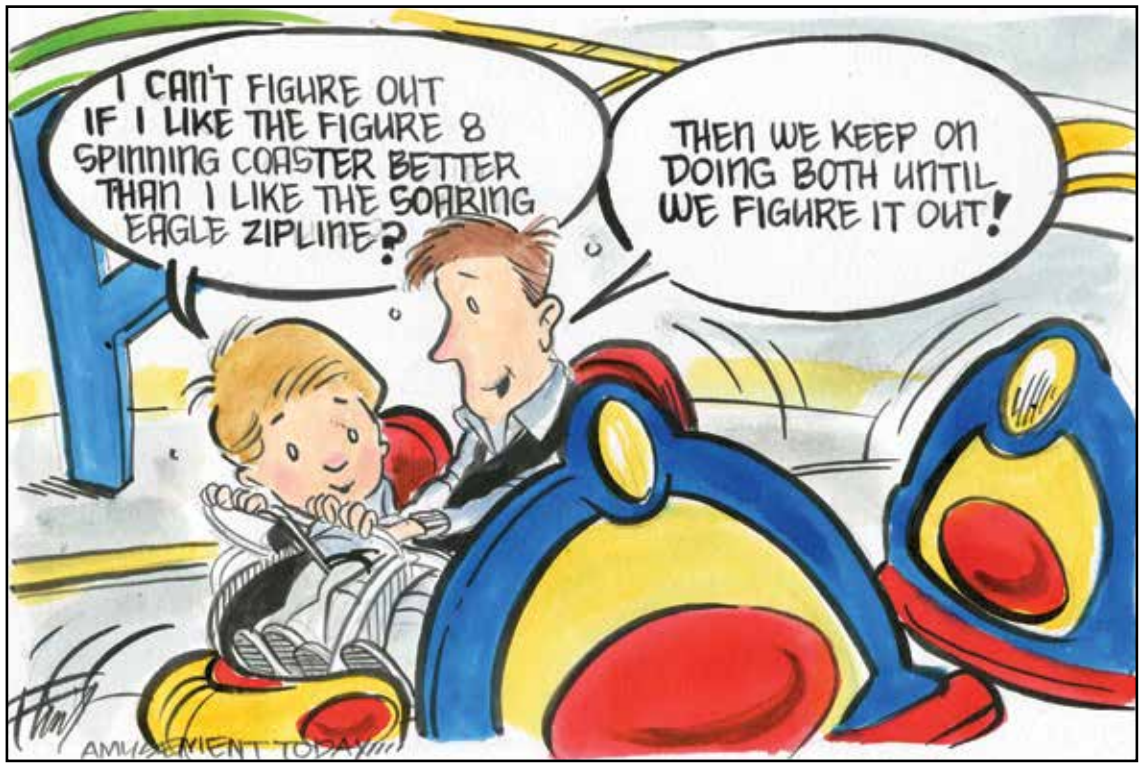
However, with the fading of the 50¢ gate admission comes the rise of FECs. Indoor facilities provide amusement in all kinds of weather, and with a history in arcade-based entertainment, the modern FEC is equipped to provide a wide-array of attractions and options for families looking for budget-friendly play.

FECs have evolved into a realm of endless possibilities. Go-kart tracks have gone multi-level. Family-friendly roller coasters such as the SBF-Visa spinning coaster offered by Rides-4-U have become easy for FECs to add to their lineup. The thrill ante continues to be upped as FECs buy zipline products from suppliers such Soaring Eagle and Extreme Engineering. The modern influx of virtual reality attractions allows for the smallest of spaces to be an adventure into the furthest reaches of space. Certainly the S&S Worldwide Frog Hopper has been a popular kids ride popping up and there's been a resurgence in adding bowling lanes and laser tag.

The evolution of the modern FEC hasn't been limited to attractions, either. Lunchtime hot dogs and pizza have been augmented with chef-inspired menus and restaurants. While the kids enjoy a slushie or an ice cream, parents can enjoy samples from fully stocked bars.

As the FEC market has jumped to new levels, it remains rooted in the classic "pay as you play" pricing format of the traditional amusement park. Family budgets aren't impacted drastically the moment parents take the kids through the front door. A family can bowl together, kids can ride a few of the rides, mom and dad can enjoy a drink while the kids play a few games and — when they leave — there's still money left for a return visit on an upcoming weekend.

FLINT'S VIEW: *Bubba Flint*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THEN WE KEEP ON DOING BOTH UNTIL WE FIGURE IT OUT!
AMUSEMENT TODAY

GUEST OPINION: *Erik Guthrie, Curator, Laser Tag Museum*

Enjoying 'laser' focus at Amusement Expo

Guthrie

This year marks the 35th anniversary of commercial laser tag. It's also the fifth year of the Laser Tag Convention's colocation with Amusement Expo International (AEI), which is returning to Las Vegas March 26-28.

While serving as curator of the Laser Tag Museum, located in rent-free space generously provided by Lazer Blaze inside its facility in Louisville, Ky., I also coordinate the Laser Tag Convention. The convention provides marketing and educational opportunities and serves as a fundraiser for the museum. There are not many museums devoted to specific attractions, so we are fortunate to have a centralized location in which to preserve and share laser tag history, and we are grateful to our partners at AEI for helping us to promote the museum and its mission.

In addition, we value the direct support of laser tag manufacturers that contribute equipment prototypes and decommissioned pieces to the museum's extensive collection. These artifacts show the evolution of the game and are joined by more unique pieces, including laser tag packs that have appeared in films and television shows and have been autographed by actors Michael J. Fox, Kevin Sorbo and others.

Virtually every major laser tag manufacturer will be participating in this year's Laser Tag Convention, which coincides with International Laser Tag Day on March 28. And once again, the event will offer seminars for laser tag operators and entrepreneurs in two separate tracks. (The schedule is available at lasertagconvention.com.)

Although laser tag's growth has leveled off in recent years, it remains stable — with more than 1,220 gaming facilities currently operating in North America alone. Despite challenges from new technology such as virtual reality, laser tag continues to be a practical and, most importantly, cost-effective form of interactive entertainment. FEC operators love it because it is unbeatable in throughput, operational simplicity, theming flexibility and return on investment.

To learn more about the Laser Tag Museum and its supporters, please visit us at lasertagmuseum.com. We're looking forward to showing everyone what's new in this gaming arena during our gathering at AEI.

Opinions expressed on this page are those of the columinst(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher.

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2 MINUTE DRILL

AT: Janice Witherow

Brian Kilpatrick, Adventure Island/Sea World Parks & Entertainment

Brian Kilpatrick caught the amusement industry "bug" 31 years ago when he started as a supervisor at **Sea World San Diego**, and he hasn't looked back since. Now the vice president of **Adventure Island/Sea World Parks & Entertainment** in Tampa, Fla., Brian is known for having a true passion for his team and developing employees to their full potential, along with displaying a keen mind for strategic planning. He is involved in several industry and community organizations where he contributes a welcoming and inclusive leadership style.

Brian Kilpatrick has developed a true passion for his team and employees at Adventure Island/Sea World Parks & Entertainment. AT/TIM BALDWIN

Title: Vice President Adventure Island / SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment.

Number of years in the industry: 31 years.

Best thing about the industry ... Absolutely the people — employees, colleagues, our guests and everyone in between. When I started 31 years ago, I knew this was a business I wanted to grow up in after my first meeting with other new ambassadors and seeing all the people in the park having so much fun.

Favorite amusement ride ... Alpengeist at Busch Gardens Williamsburg. I worked there early on in my career and always enjoyed taking a break or ending a long day with a fun ride. It's an awesome inverted coaster and one of the greats from B&M.

If I wasn't working in the amusement industry, I would be ... Teaching or coaching.

Biggest challenge facing our industry Sustainable and quality entry-level workforce.

The thing I like most about amusement/ water park season is ... The variability. No two days are the same and every day is a new challenge and opportunity.

The three words that best describe my office are ... Simple, organized and always empty (because I spend the majority of my time in the parks and on the grounds with our ambassadors and guests).

Favorite dessert ... It's a tie between key lime pie and apple crumble pie.

My motto is ... Work hard, never stop learning, teach and share your experiences every day, and always remember where you started. We all had a first day once…never forget that. It keeps you grounded.

I usually call it a night at ... After the late night news and some end of day comedy!

If my life was turned into a sitcom, it would be called ... *Seinfeld*!

Right now, I would rather be ... On the beach.

My friends all call me ... "B.K."

The last TV series I got hooked on was ... "Law and Order" reruns.

Growing up, I wanted to be ... A police officer.

My first concert ever was ... A rap concert I went to with my friends in high school. Run-DMC at the San Diego Sports Arena. I went through several phases of musical enjoyment growing up. I think it has helped shape my music taste today, where I enjoy a very wide range on music and styles. I like it all!

At lunch time, you can usually find me ... During the season, lunch is sporadic as the business drives my activities for the day. But when I do take a lunch, I enjoy nothing more than sitting with our ambassadors and learning more about them and how I can help make those experiences at work more meaningful.

Pick one: snow skiing or water skiing? Snow skiing, although I grew up water skiing in San Diego on Mission Bay and still enjoy the freedom and fun of the sport.

My commute to work is ... Easy and peaceful.

At the top of my "bucket list" is ... Flying in a fighter jet. I've always loved speed. Growing up in San Diego, I went to the air show at the Naval Air Station for almost 20 years straight. I've always been fascinated by jets and going mach speed upside down would be the ultimate.

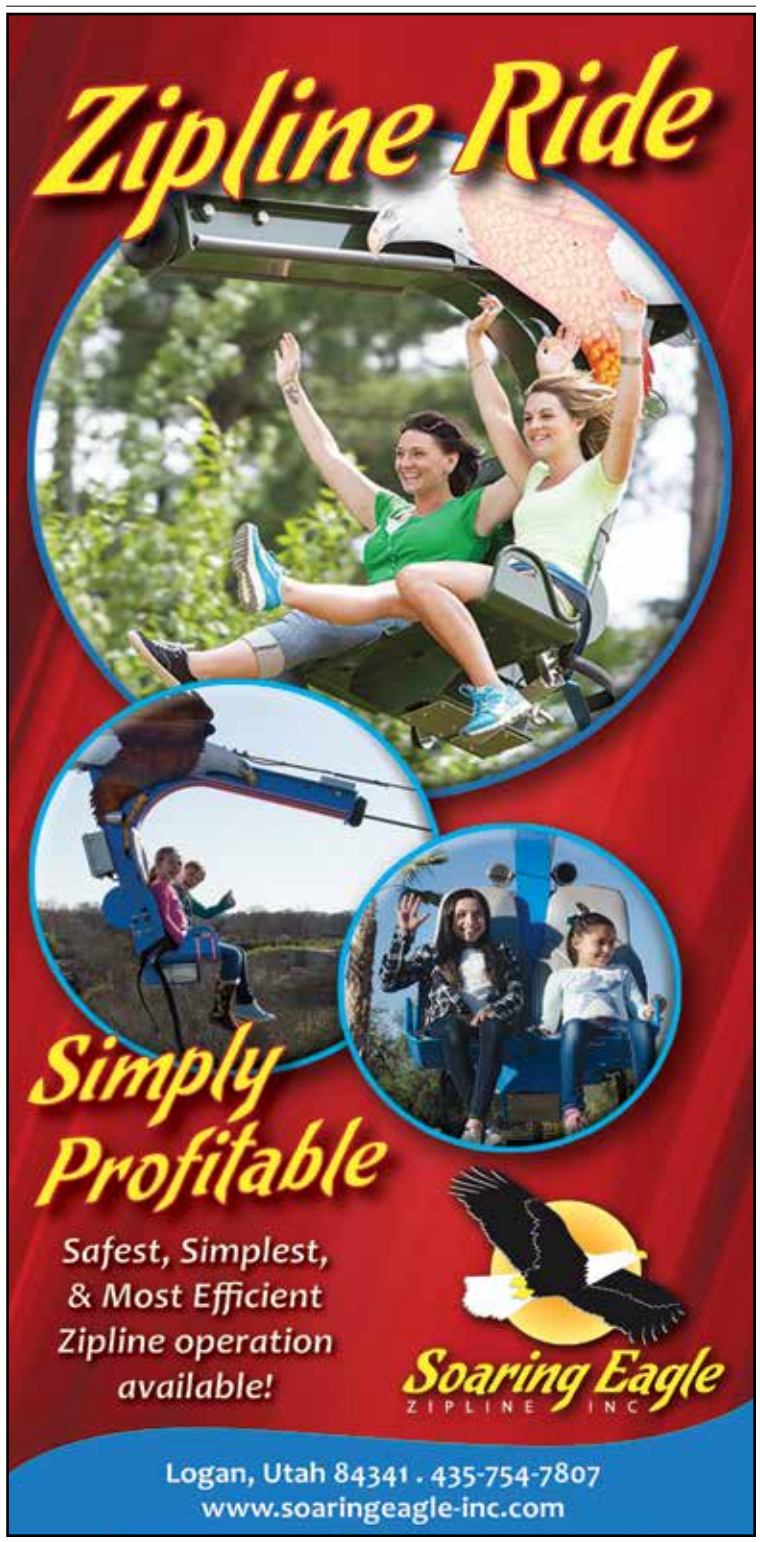
My perfect weekend consists of ... If I'm not running in a mud race, I enjoy mountain biking or a relaxing day at the beach.

Favorite sport to play ... Golf. When I was younger I was very active in playing competitive soccer, baseball and softball. While I still enjoy those, golf is a tough sport, difficult to master but so much fun to try and figure out. Also, it's such a great sport to enjoy the outdoors and spend time with friends.

THE INDUSTRY SEEN

Finally a fair amount of rest

DEVON, Pa. — Houghton Enterprises's Blake Houghton, who recently turned three years old, is hard at work during the Devon Horse Show and County Fair last May in Devon, Pa. Blake is Jim Houghton's grandson and third generation in the 100% family run operation that has more than 30 rides, 25 games and 10 food stands playing spots in Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware. Based in Cochranville, Pa., Houghton Enterprises plays fairs, church and fire company festivals. COURTESY HOUGHTON ENTERPRISES, INC.



AEI at a glance…

Tuesday, March 26
Registration: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
LVCC, North Hall 1

"The Irresistible Power of Strategic Storytelling"
8:30 – 9:30 a.m.
Westgate Resort

Seminars & Panels
9:45 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Westgate Resort

All-Industry Gala
5:15 – 7:15 p.m.
Westgate Resort, Ballroom A

Wednesday, March 27
Registration: 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Awards & Opening Ceremony
9:15 a.m. – 10 a.m.
LVCC, North Hall 1

Exhibit Hall Open
10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
LVCC, North Hall 1

Scholarship Raffle Drawing
5:30 – 5:45 p.m., Booth #133

Thursday, March 28
Registration: 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.
LVCC, North Hall 1

Exhibit Hall Open
10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
LVCC, North Hall 1

Scholarship Raffle Drawing
5:30 – 5:45 p.m., Booth #133

EXPO

Continued from page 1

is our largest to date."

Organizers were expecting to see numbers matching or exceeding last year's event, which set an attendance record. AEI 2018's 169 exhibitors welcomed more than 3,200 attendees, with about 1,700 buyers. As of early last month, AEI 2019 had already signed up 162 exhibitors collectively covering more square feet of display space than last year.

AEI Conference, a full day of educational sessions comprising seminars and panels, takes place Tuesday, March 26, at the Westgate Resort, while the trade show runs Wednesday, March 27, and Thursday, March 28 in the convention center's North Hall 1. The latter covers the complete spectrum of street-operation and FEC equipment, including video games, VR attractions, kiddie rides, pinball machines, dartboards, pool tables, jukeboxes, redemption equipment, ATMs, play spaces and more.

"The Irresistible Power of Strategic Storytelling," a keynote presentation by **Kindra Hall**, opens AEI Conference. Hall is president and chief strategy officer of **Steller Collective**, a Phoenix-based marketing agency focused on the strategic application of storytelling to today's communication challenges. The educational day continues with different breakout sessions designed specifically for street operators and FECs, along with an intensive VR track.

Motivational speaker Kindra Hall will deliver the keynote address at AEI 2019, to be headquartered at the Westgate Las Vegas Resort & Casino.
COURTESY AMUSEMENT EXPO INTERNATIONAL; WESTGATE LAS VEGAS RESORT & CASINO

Following the enthusiastic response to AEI's inaugural VR focus in 2018, the event is doubling down on that form of entertainment this year — once again welcoming VR attraction owners, operators, manufacturers and visionaries. Said Schneider: "VR exhibitors and attendees will have the perfect format to exchange information about this emerging technology and how it integrates into location-based entertainment businesses."

The 2019 VR education program once again will be curated by **Bob Cooney**, location-based VR guru and author of the book *Real Money from Virtual Reality*. Sessions will cover technological advances in VR hardware, VR escape rooms, the esports explosion, and how VR and augmented reality are impacting the laser tag business.

AEI Conference will wrap up with presenter **Tyler Bushnell**, founder of **Polycade**, who will discuss key strategies for building recurring business by leveraging the nuances of millennials and Generation Z.

Besides education and equipment, a highlight of AEI will be the All-Industry Gala Reception, to be held March 26, 5-7 p.m., at the Westgate Resort.

Visit AEI's website for additional information on registration and lodging, as well as the complete event schedule.

• amusementexpo.org

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Amusement Expo International 2019

Exhibitor Listing • Las Vegas, Nev.

Adrenaline Amusements 1213
American Alpha Inc. 145
American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) . 1432
American Changer 239
AMIEntertainment Network 311
AMOA 1428
AMOA Coin-Op Cares Education & Charitable Foundation . . . 137
Amusement Connect 1327
Amusement Products 1228
Amusement Resources 1427
Amusement Today **945**
Andamiro Co.,Ltd 101
Apple Industries, Inc 713
Arachnid 360 310
ARC-Studios 1103
Art Attack 908
Artoy Trading Llc 1229
Astrosystems, Inc. 1122
ATM Merchant Services. 1101
AVS Companies. 133
Bandai Namco Amusement America 123
Banilla Games 537
Barron Games International 233
Battle Company 1300
Bay Tek Games 109
Betson Enterprises 323
Big Daddy Games 501
Bissell Commercial 1045
BMI Merchandise 232
Bob's Space Racer's Inc. 1014
Bowling Center Management 1131
Brunswick Bowling Products, LLC 809
Bumblebear Games 1305
Captain's Auction Warehouse 135
Cardinal Xpress 639
Centeredge Software 710
Chicago Gaming Company 1439
Coastal Amusements Inc. 409
Coin Tech Cashless System 244
CoinOp Marketplace 544
CPI 530
Creative Works 1223
Cypress ATM 245
Delta Strike USA 1134
Digital Centre America, Inc. 1144
Elaut Group 811
Embed 605
Escapology 1337
EZ Inflatables, Inc. 1201
Family Fun Companies, Inc. 305
FetchRev 1315
Firestone Financial 714
Fish Game Kings 1203
Flagship Carpets 1230
Foto ATM 1002
Fun Express 522
Fun Hoops Inc. 1339
Funovation 1323
Game Time International 1429
Gamebox Builders, Llc 1332
Gold Standard Games/Shelti 915
Heartland Micropayments. 635
HMS Monaco 504
Hoffman Mint 237
Hot Games 1431
IAAPA 336
IGPM/Kalkomat 1106
Incredible Technologies Inc. 623
Innovative Concepts In Entertainment Inc. 423
Innovative Technology 1004
Inowize / VR Quest Arena 1301
Intercard 1013
International Currency Technologies Corp. 532
IPConfigure 1044
iPlayco 903
Jennison Entertainment Technologies 1123
King Plush 746
Klopp: Money Handling Equipment 130
LAI Games 436
Laserblast 405
Laserforce International. 526
Lasertag By Zone. 339
Lasertron 1424
LaZer Runner Inc. 1331
Live Oak Bank 911
Lock America, Inc. 616
Marra Forni 1003
Max Amusements 1232
MCM Elements 728
MD World 1330
Memopark 841
Minority Media 1311
Modal Vr 1237
NECA. 741
Northeast Insurance Center 1422
Nu Tech Promotions 1244
Omega Pattern Works. 500
Orange Bendrove Ltd 636
Overthrow Robotics 1210
Pace-O-Matic, Inc. 627
Paradise Arcade 1333
Party Center Software 1335
Payment Alliance International 444
Payrange Inc. 745
Peek-A-Boo Toys 306
Platformavr, Inc 940
Play Time Toys, Inc. 114
Polycade 1404
Pong Game Studios 1334
Primero Games 803
Pro-Games Poland 1403
Pyramid Technologies, Inc. 340
Qnc Inc/ Quik `N Crispy 907
Qubicaamf Bowling Products 1328
Raydon Amusement 1130
Redemption Plus 612
Replay Magazine 407
Rhode Island Novelty 344
Rides-4-U, Inc. 528
Riverslot 1010
Rocket Amusements 1009
Rocket Effect 1111
S & B Candy And Toy Co. Inc. 1409
Sacoa Playcard System 122
Safeparkusa 1007
Sega Amusements International Ltd. 201
Semnox Solutions Llc 301
Shaffer Distributing 845
Silent Partner Software, Llc. 744
Smart Industries Corp. 611
Smart Software 400
Speedy's One Stop Repair Service 134
State Fair Mini Donuts Usa, Inc. 905
Stern Pinball, Inc. 335
Studio B. 304
Sureshot Redemption 545
Suzohapp 513
TACK Electronics, Inc. 112
Talon Simulations 1233
Team Play, Inc. 1113
The Inflatable Depot & I Depot Play 1345
The Really Big Crane Company 104
Tigapo 1133
Touchmagix Inc. 300
Touchtunes 523
Tourist Attractions & Parks Magazine 1425
Tray 844
Trestle 1126
Triotech 705
TS Trading Systems 1344
U-COCO Co.,Ltd. 1006
UNIS Technology (Canada) Ltd. 505
Unit-E Technologies, L.C. 100
Univest Capital 132
US Bowling Corporation 108
Valley Dynamo. 223
Venco Business Solutions 126
Vending Times 1426
Watch Time, Inc. 1129
WIK Games 1209
World Plush Inc 102
Zydexo Games 1139

SeaWorld adds new CEO

ORLANDO, Fla. — After **Joel Manby** resigned as Chief Executive Officer less than a year ago, **SeaWorld Entertainment** has tapped the chief operating officer of **Carnival Cruise Line** to be its new CEO. **Gustavo "Gus" Antorcha** joined SeaWorld on Feb. 18 and also now serves on its board of directors. **John Reilly**, who had been serving as an interim CEO, has become chief operating officer.

Antorcha

"We are thrilled to welcome Gus to the team," offered SeaWorld Board Chairman **Yoshikazu Maruyama**. "He is a proven leader with broad experiences in the travel and leisure industries."

Commenting on his new role, Antorcha said: "I am excited to join the SeaWorld team. SeaWorld has an irreplaceable portfolio of incredibly valuable assets and brands, providing guests with highly differentiated and inspiring experiences.

•**seaworldentertainment.com**

MAILBAG

Supporting the IAAPA Foundation

To the Editor:

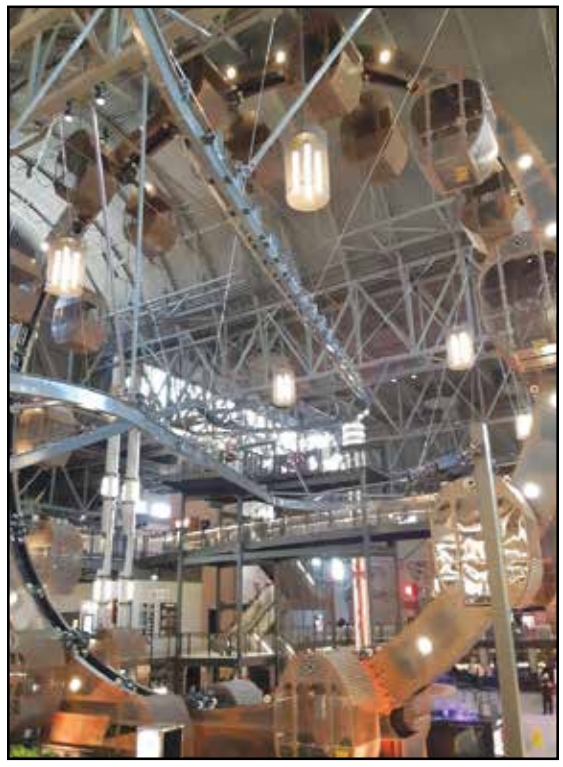
I just wanted to thank you for the awesome story in EXTRA! EXTRA! Your Desktop Edition (originally appearing in print in *Amusement Today*'s February 2019 issue) highlighting the **IAAPA Foundation** and Tom & Bobbie's tireless dedication to making the organization a success.

You really captured not only the true spirit of the organization but also the passion of the people involved (I love that picture of Doug Akers!!) and the great success the foundation has had recently.

I loved the quote from Tom, "People need to know about and understand the foundation." Well — thanks to you — people will know about and understand the organization.

You are a wonderful supporter of our industry and articles like this will make a positive impact to many peoples' lives. That is pretty special!

Thank you and best regards,
Jim Seay
Premier Rides



The hubless wheel from Larson International can be loaded on both sides. The rails of Telegraphe, a Cloud Coaster by Extreme Engineering are seen piercing the Larson hubless wheel. COURTESY MÉGA PARC; EXTREME ENGINEERING

▶MEGA PARK

Continued from page 1

patent application process for a cantilevered seat design concept dating back to 1999," said **Jeff Glinter**, director of engineering. "Assembling the ride inside the mall was like building a ship in a bottle. Most of the ride was assembled with smaller cranes from inside the building. However, to install the last piece of track, a hole in the ceiling was created and a large crane was used from the final pick from outside the building."

Called The Zenith, the wheel has 24 gondolas, 12 per side, each capable of holding four passengers. This gives a total of 96 passengers for one ride cycle. In slower periods, the park has the option of operating only one side when the demand is lower.

"**Martin & Vleminckx** were in charge of the ride installation and did a great job as the final piece had to go up between the building trusses and then rotate to the final position," added Glinter. "The top of the final track piece is only 15 inches below the inside of the building ceiling structure."

The park opted for a mix of solid and clear floors in the gondolas. Depending on which is ridden, there may be a bonus view — or thrill — when looking down. The gondolas were designed around ADA accessibility. A standard wheelchair can be rolled into any of the gondolas.

"The rusted steel look of the ride was requested to fit with the park theming. It was a very custom paint job and is very authentic," said Glinter. "The final painted parts look just like some bare steel that had been left outside our shop in Plainview, Texas. It did lead to a lot of questions during construction as many workers kept asking when we were going to paint the ride."

Traveling directly through the wheel is Telegraphe, a new suspended single rail coaster from **Extreme Engineering**. Working in tandem with Larson so the two rides could interact, the company has stated that the new coaster has been in development for close to two years once the mall "pulled the trigger." Soaring 60 feet above the crowd below, the single seat coaster provides an open feeling as each rider flies above the excitement. A 42-inch height requirement also aims for the family demographic.

"The [new] cart is such a big breakthrough for both us and the client," said **Philip Wilson**, executive vice president of sales and marketing, Extreme Engineering. "You really feel like you are soaring in an airplane. It's smooth."

Wilson said the operator has the ability to make adjustments on the cart to lighten dampeners to make for a wilder ride on the turns if they desire. He also was pleased by the new lapbar system and its ease of use, as well as the new vehicle giving the company its first entry into **Roller Coaster Database**.

Los Bandidos is one of the storylines in Triotech's 200th interactive theater. COURTESY TRIOTECH

"When we designed the cart, we made sure we could add lighting, sound, a canopy… It could be a dark ride," added Wilson.

Triotech reached a milestone with the installation of its 200th dark ride interactive theater. Called Cortex, the eight-seat theater offers various storylines in which guests can participate.

"Méga Parc chose several [themes] to offer to their guests. They are currently running 'Los Banditos' and 'Forbidden Mine,' but as any Triotech client can do, they have the flexibility to add or change titles over time. This offers great value for operators as it drives repeat traffic," said **Christian Martin**, marketing vice president, Triotech.

"It is truly an iconic attraction for Triotech, offering an intense multisensory adventure combined with cutting-edge technology and special effects that provide the user with the best experience there is," said **Ernest Yale**, founding president. "We are proud to have set up our 200th XD Dark Ride interactive theatre in Quebec City."

"I think Méga Park becomes a reference project for North America," Martin told *AT*. "The fact that the park is a shopping mall but also offers 'open access' is an interesting model. Guests pay per ride. This means a low barrier to experience the park as guests do not have to commit to a day pass or another form of gate payment to come in."

However, guests still have the option of an evening or all-day wristband if desired.

Among the ride selection is a new Speedway ride (called Convoyeur) from **Zamperla**. Another Zamperla children's ride was retained from the original ride package and rethemed.

Other ride vendors include **SBF** (Hélix spinning ride, Piston drop tower and Express train), **RDC** (Pare Chocs bumper cars) and **Visa** (Pendule swinging ride).

The **Mack** family coaster, now called Electro, continues to roar around the perimeter of the park. A thrill ride (Force G) from Moser and a beautifully restored Carrousel from **Bertazzon** are also in the updated ride mix.

Other attractions include competitive gaming and children's play structures.

"We also have the longest indoor skating rink — 750 feet," said Suavé. Ingeniously, the former typical oval skating rink has been transformed into a long pathway encircling the park.

The park has also included a new mascot within the theme, a robot called Mega.

With Canada's northern climate, a year-round, indoor entertainment destination is a smart move.

"I've done a lot of load testing of rides in my career but using salt bags for ballast was a new one for me," said Glinter. "It makes sense given Quebec winters and the need to keep sidewalks clear of ice, but it still makes me laugh when I think of it."

For both vendors in the process and customers who are now enjoying the finished product, the project can be deemed a success.

"The makeover is very impressive with a common theme connecting the whole park," said Martin.

"We are pleased with this rare opportunity to work with Mega Parc to have this impact and put us on the map," said Wilson. "They are great people."

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PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

▸ Neon Museum stirs Las Vegas nostalgia — page 16 / FAIRS — pages 18-23

Urban Air Adventure Park launches indoor skydiving in Ft. Worth

AT: *Tim Baldwin*
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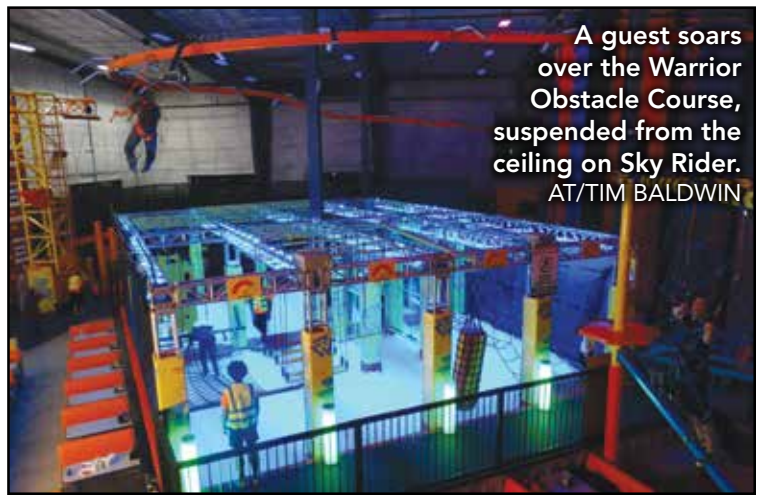
Indoor skydiving is the newest attraction in Urban Air's portfolio. COURTESY URBAN AIR



A guest soars over the Warrior Obstacle Course, suspended from the ceiling on Sky Rider. AT/TIM BALDWIN

FT. WORTH, Texas — On February 9, the latest **Urban Air Adventure Park** to open — now totaling 67 — offers a first: indoor skydiving. While standalone indoor skydiving facilities populate the country, this is the first instance of such recreation appearing at an indoor active family entertainment center.

"This is a major announcement for Urban Air," said CEO **Michael Browning**. "We are using patented, innovative technology to give our guests a world-class experience. What makes this encounter unique is that park patrons can choose to skydive only, or they can fly in addition to enjoying an array of other attractions and signature rides."

Various packages give the customer the freedom to select the best fit for their available time, interests and budget. Families choosing skydiving get two flying experiences within the tunnel. Those opting for the Platinum Package gets the skydiving experience and everything else Urban Air Adventure Park has to offer for $49.99.

"One of our slogans is 'Get Up, Get Fly,'" said **Michael Calloway**, marketing manager. "How can we take what we do to the next level, how can we elevate innovation — literally and figuratively? Indoor skydiving brings more to the table. This provides the wind tunnel with all these other attractions."

In total, the new Urban Air Ft. Worth boasts 40,000 square feet of activities. Decked out with color-changing LED lighting, the center also offers eight private birthday rooms.

In addition to skydiving, the facility offers Sky Rider Indoor Coaster, a signature attraction that secures visitors in a harness from which they fly almost 30 feet above spectators below on a suspended rail. The track length is 331 feet and features eight curves causing riders to swing outward.

Physical activities include Warrior Obstacle Course featuring four lanes of American Ninja-style obstacles, Ultimate Dodge Ball and Wipeout which pits athletes against a moving beam. Climbing walls, a ropes course and a soft area playground for kids nine and under expand the options.

Leap of Faith is one of the newer Urban Air offerings. "Standing on a platform 20 feet in the air, people literally jump to the bag on the other side. There's no tension when you jump, but it will catch you," said Calloway.

"When you say 'family entertainment,' we really go out to ensure guests can come in and play together and enjoy quality time," said **Jay Thomas**, chief commercial officer. "The decision for including indoor skydiving was a dream of Michael Browning, our CEO; he is an amazing innovator, he was the first to create the indoor adventure concept."

In addition to the introduction of skydiving, Thomas reported that the children's play structure is the largest Urban Air has ever included.

"We call it the Adventure Hub," he said. "The Sky Rider takes off from the top. That's a good three-and-a-half stories in the air."

Maria Goodman, director of creative development and innovation, likes the empowering message behind all the activity. "We have a brand-new look for our mascot, Urbie. In our new T-shirt designs, you will see him with very empowering messages for our guests. Kids that have knocked out their opponent on our Battle Beam raise their joust up and feel very empowered for that moment, whether they realize it or not. Kids in our T-shirts will have messages of 'I've activated awesome' or 'I'm a warrior.' People can associate that feeling and carry it with them," she told *Amusement Today*.

"Innovation really does differentiate you from everybody else," Goodman added. "It's an epic responsibility. We want Urban Air franchisees to know that we have their backs. They put trust in our brand. Attractions can be duplicated [elsewhere], but we have an in-house attractions team; their devotion is incredible. Our franchisees are going to have access to IP overlays we have coming. We are going to innovate the way people play with products and experience ride attractions. We're going to add story telling touches, but we're on a mission to gamify experiences. We're in it to win it; we're going to rev it up and extend the play patterns of our attractions."

A unique aspect of this particular facility is that it was a from-the-ground-up project. More frequently, Urban Air has brought new life to vacated spaces in retail areas. Thomas approximated that only about five percent of their properties are built that way. The disadvantage is that it takes longer to complete, but the advantages allow them to build as high as they want and design the structures the way they want.

With the first Urban Air opening in 2011, the growth of the company is exceptionally strong.

"Our goal is to have 300 locations open by 2020," said Thomas. "We have another great innovation that is going to be introduced in June."

Visitors scale the walls as Leap of Faith (left) dares participants to jump from the elevated platform. Maria Goodman poses with the Urbie (above)who sports his new look. AT/TIM BALDWIN

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Frankie's unveils massive fun park in Charlotte

HUNTERSVILLE, N.C. — With many attractions — including Charlotte, N.C.'s largest arcade — and in partnership with **Player One Amusement Group**, **Frankie's Fun Park** opened a Charlotte location in the fall of 2018. The fifth Frankie's business in the Carolinas, the park is open year-round and sits on 21 acres with 84,000 square feet of indoor entertainment space.

"We are proud to bring new jobs and careers to the Charlotte/Huntersville area. We hired 213 employees through Nov. 30 and plan on hiring an additional 100-150 before our peak season hits in the spring and summer," said Stuart Wallace, marketing director of Frankie's.

The exterior of Frankie's features Pirate Island Golf consisting of three unique 18-hole miniature golf courses where no two holes are alike. It also features three custom-designed go-kart tracks: the Road Course, a quarter-mile track for the whole family; the Slick Track, that pits racing drivers against one another; and the Drifter Track, with challenging hairpin turns.

Amusement rides aren't lacking at the fun park, either. A **Zamperla** Discovery, a Tea Cup ride, and a Mega Disk-O highlight an array of flat rides for guests.

The indoor portion of the Charlotte location hosts immersive experiences such as an XD Dark Ride from **Triotech** with four different movies and a **Hologate** four-player VR experience.

Additionally, a laser tag arena (**Delta Strike**, **Creative Works**) themed to a post-apocalyptic Charlotte and 24 lanes of luxury bowling augment an arcade with over 100 games to choose from. Overlooking the arcade is the 30-foot-tall Drop Zone tower (**Moser**) thrill ride.

Rounding out the experiences are a massive three-story fun house playground and LED-illuminated bumper cars from **Ride Developement Company**.

Frankie's has four additional locations in Charleston, S.C. (opened 1990), Columbia, S.C. (opened 1994) Greenville, S.C. (opened 1999) and in Raleigh, North Carolina (opened 2005).

•frankies.com

The recently opened Charlotte, N.C. location of Frankie's Fun Park (above) sits on more than 21 acres with an 84,000-square-foot indoor entertainment center. Go-kart tracks and luxury bowling (right) complement an array of rides and Charlotte's largest video arcade. COURTESY FRANKIE'S FUN PARK

Multiple levels of fun, sport bounce into Oregon

BEND, Ore. — A community's interest in a growing sport and the quest for family entertainment merged in Bend, Ore., with the arrival of **Trampoline Zone & Adventure Park**. Opening its doors in December 2018, the four-story "activetainment" center features two active entertainment options which appeal to the local community.

The first floor of the complex features the Trampoline Zone, a full-scale indoor trampoline park which provides guests of all ages with a variety of attractions. Guests can enjoy an expansive main court with orange and blue trampoline beds, gladiator battle beam, a 22-foot tall climbing tower, kid's trampoline court, laser maze, basketball slam dunk courts, and a ninja warrior obstacle course.

Butch Roberts, co-owner and managing partner, commented that the idea for the 50,000-square-foot facility came when a family member approached him about opening a trampoline park around the same time that **Werner Zehnder** was looking to open an indoor pickleball center. Pickleball, a paddle sport that combines table tennis, badminton, and traditional tennis, is a popular sport in the Bend area.

"My wife's family suggested that we build a trampoline park in town," said Roberts. "As we were considering the trampoline park, we met with Werner. He was looking for a place to build an indoor pickleball facility. Three and a half years later, here we are."

Active fun is the name of the game at the recently opened Trampoline Zone & Adventure Park. COURTESY TRAMPOLINE ZONE & ADVENTURE PARK

The second story includes the Pickleball Zone, the Bend community's first indoor option for pickleball games and tournaments. Complete with a total of eight first-class indoor pickleball courts, a warm up area, and an upstairs viewing platform, the popular pastime can be enjoyed by guests of all ages.

Once the decision to open the complex was finalized, the partners began looking for reputable vendors to help guide their project from concept to completion. Roberts began his search for a trampoline park manufacturer at the **International Association of Trampoline Parks (IATP)** Conference and Trade Show.

"We were looking for a trampoline park manufacturer who could partner with us, was respected in the industry and shared our values," Roberts explained.

Trampoline park designer and manufacturer **Best American Trampolines** met the criteria for which Roberts was looking. Their team exceeded his expectations from day one.

"Best American could not be a better fit for us. Everyone was supportive, positive, and knowledgeable," Roberts stated.

In addition to the Pickleball Zone and Trampoline Zone, the venue offers guests the Jumping Pickle Café with an array of food and beverage options including a selection of local craft beer and wine. The facility also boasts five party suites.

•tzbend.com

Parties bring local honors to FEG properties

ITASCA, Il. — **Family Entertainment Group (FEG)** announced that two of its family fun centers received top honors from their supporting communities for their group events offerings.

Funtrackers Family Fun Center in Corpus Christi, Texas, has won first place in the *Caller Times* Best of the Best poll for the category "Best of the Best for Kids Parties."

Caller Times is the primary newspaper in Corpus Christi, Texas. Its Best of the Best poll gives the Corpus Christi community a chance to cast their votes in multiple categories, showcasing their favorite businesses and celebrating local excellence. Throughout the years, more than 185,000 people have attended the annual showcases to cast votes for their favorite local businesses.

Funtrackers is known in the area for its birthday parties, a large arcade and go-karts. Currently, the facility is undergoing a massive renovation which will include new attractions, an expanded menu and a fresh look.

Bonkers Columbia, an FEG property located in Columbia, Mo., was awarded the title "Best Place To Have A Birthday Party" as part of the Best of Columbia award ceremony held by the *Columbia Tribune*. The winners were chosen by online voting, with readers submitting more than 11,500 nominations and casting more than 815,000 total votes.

With a grand re-opening in February, Bonkers Columbia unveiled the new Toddler Town and Super Slide for its guests in 2019.

FEG has owned and operated family-oriented entertainment facilities both nationally and internationally since 2004. It provides services and arcade solutions for water park resorts, amusement parks, bowling centers, family entertainment centers, and more.

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Funplex invests $4 million to expand East Hanover location

EAST HANOVER, N.J. — In February, New Jersey's Funplex unveiled enhancements to its popular indoor facility in East Hanover, N.J. The $4 million investment in the complex is part of an overall $20 million investment Funplex made in both of its locations during the past four years.

Highlighting the new upgrades is a Reverse Time thrill ride and Drop-N-Twist tower, both manufactured by **SBF-Visa** and supplied by New Jersey's **Rides-4-U**.

Further renovations include a 37,000-square-foot area with a boardwalk theme featuring 20 bowling lanes and a private bowling suite from **Qubica**. Additionally, a Boardwalk Café features a mezzanine seating area offering a complete view of the boardwalk.

Funplex also debuted HyperBowling, an interactive set of games designed around an innovative bumper system. The section also will feature updated projection screens, a fresh lightshow, and new sound system.

•funplexeasthanover.com

A groundbreaking was held in December at Fun Land of Fredericksburg as construction began on its go-kart track expansion. COURTESY FUN LAND OF FREDERICKSBURG

Fun Land of Fredericksburg prepares to debut three stories of racing

FREDERICKSBURG, Va. – In April, **Fun Land of Fredericksburg** will complete a $1.2 million expansion of its go-kart track. A groundbreaking for the new raceway, which will feature a three-layer design, was held in December of 2018.

The upgraded track increases the duration of the ride and delivers a unique experience. The expansion is the first multi-layered raceway in the state of Virginia and will feature more than 1,500 feet of track, topping off at 30 feet high. The highlight of the triple layer tracks will be two multi-level helixes and a new state-of-the-art lighting system throughout. Racing along the track will be a newly purchased fleet of 40 go-karts, with up to 21 karts racing at any given point.

The investment is the largest capital expenditure in the facility's history and accompanies a rebranding effort to reflect the facility's regional pride. Formerly known as Central Park Fun-Land, new signage and an updated logo debuted in 2019 as the park adopted the moniker Fun Land of Fredericksburg.

The name change and upgraded go-kart track are the latest in a series of recent improvements to Fun Land. In 2018, the facility added an **SBF-Visa** spinning coaster dubbed Twist-N-Shout.

•funlandfredericksburg.com

Park Post-its

AT: Pam Sherborne
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Picsolve, a leading digital content capture partner for world-class visitor destinations, inked a five-year deal with five of **Merlin Entertainments'** London attractions at the first of last month. The deal includes new deals with **DreamWorks Tours: Shrek's Adventure! London** and **SEA LIFE London Aquarium**, and contract extensions with **Madame Tussauds London**, the **Coca-Cola London Eye** and **The London Dungeon.**

These attractions are implementing several of Picsolve's content capture solutions, including its green screen technology and the Experience Wall. Picsolve is also set to launch a new version of the Super Selfie at the London attractions in the near future.

•

Even though it may feel like the Christmas holidays have just concluded, **Silver Dollar City,** Branson, Mo., is already planning for its 2019 holiday season. Management announced at the end of January that an all-new, 80-foot-tall, state-of-the-art Christmas tree will debut during that park's An Old Time Christmas event later this year.

The custom-designed, towering tree will soar eight stories into the night sky as the centerpiece of the all-new area, Joy on Town Square. The entire project is estimated to cost $1.5 million.

The tree will feature hundreds of thousands of dancing high-resolution lights with an infinite ability to combine color, music, light and animated imagery.

Silver Dollar City's An Old Time Christmas has won the "Best Theme Park Holiday Event" in the nation by USA Today's 10 Best poll.

•

SeaWorld Orlando's Seven Seas Food Festival has returned this year with more dates than ever. Held every weekend from Feb. 9-May 5, guests are able to sip and sample their way around the world with unique food and beverage offerings. SeaWorld added Friday evenings this year for the first time. Open from 4-9 p.m., the Friday openings began Feb. 15.

In addition to delicious eats, guests visiting SeaWorld's Seven Seas Food Festival can enjoy world-class entertainment each Saturday and Sunday at Bayside Stadium included with theme park admission.

•

Expanding Georgia-based family entertainment center franchiser **Stars and Strikes** has announced plans to open two new locations, each budgeted at $7 million, before the end of the year, bringing its total number of centers to 15.

A 62,000-square-foot facility headed for Raleigh, N.C., the company's first in the state, will house 24 bowling lanes (eight of them VIP lanes). In addition to bowling, there will be a games-packed 9,000-square-foot arcade and prize store, multistory laser tag, bumper cars, an eatery with chef-crafted cuisine and specialty beverages, and a large full-service bar.

The other facility is coming to Irmo, S.C., and will be second Stars and Strikes facility in the state. It will cover 50,000 square feet and incorporate all of the same features as the Raleigh location, including a 7,500-square-foot arcade. Both of the locally-owned-and-operated facilities also will offer private party rooms and an upscale corporate event room with seating for more than 100.

Each of the new locations will create 150-plus jobs. Stars and Strikes currently employs more than 1,300 throughout the southeastern U.S., including Georgia, Alabama and Tennessee.

•

Manchester United Football Club Limited, of England, in partnership with a leading Chinese property developer, **Harves**, has announced that it will open a series of club-themed entertainment and experience centers throughout China.

The first **Manchester United Entertainment and Experience Centers** are scheduled to open in Beijing, Shanghai and Shenyang by the end of 2020. They will use interactive attractions and exhibitions to bring the excitement of Manchester United and its **Old Trafford** stadium, located in Greater Manchester England, to their fans in China. Fans who visit will be able to experience the thrill of a match day at Old Trafford as well as learn the history and heritage of the club.

The Beijing center will be located within the **Beijing FUN** development, in the historic **Qianmen Dashilan** area right next to **Tiananmen Square** and the **Forbidden City.**

•

Space Center Houston, Texas, has launched a renovated and updated website offering new features including a streamlined site-wide navigation system with consistent menu functionality that directs visitors to the information most relevant to them.

Visitors can discover upcoming events and educational programs through a user-friendly event calendar with multiple viewing options.

To get a look at the new site go to **spacecenter.org.**

•

Busch Gardens Tampa Bay, Fla., has begun its 60th anniversary celebration of 52 weeks of events for families including festivities especially for young explorers with the announcement of the 2019 Preschool Card. The Preschool Card is valid for unlimited visits at both Busch Gardens Tampa Bay and Adventure Island for children ages five years or younger. Florida residents have until May 19 to register for the card and it is valid through Dec. 31, 2019.

Some of the special events include, in March, a Celebration with Peppa Pig, Time to Be a Hero with PJ Masks and, in May, Safari of Fun Spring Kids' Weekends.

More information and a complete listing of the events may be found on Busch Gardens Tampa Bay web site, **buschgardenstampa.com.**

•

Urban Air Adventure Park operators received the recent honor of being listed number one in the Trampoline Park category and 97 overall in *Entrepreneur Magazine*'s "Franchise 500." Urban Air Adventure Park was selected out of 1,000 applications based on several key factors including growth and financial strength and stability.

Urban Air centers offer a variety of attractions that go beyond trampolines, which has added to its success and growth.

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Warner Bros.' Studio Tour keeps pace with hit movies

AT: *Dean Lamanna*
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BURBANK, Calif. — With the famed film company behind it having released a number of high-profile movies of late, **Warner Bros. Studio Tour Hollywood** has been busy updating its exhibits.

The backlot attraction recently placed on display several original costumes and props from the **DC Comics**-based fantasy adventure *Aquaman*, the romantic comedy *Crazy Rich Asians* and the musical-drama remake *A Star is Born*.

"The iconic pieces and sets from our recent smash hits offer guests an intimate view of these important films," said **Gary Soloff**, director of marketing for the tour. "These additions highlight Warner Bros.' commitment to providing our guests with an authentic experience that brings them closer to the stories they love on screen."

Items from *Aquaman* include the colorful amphibious outfits worn by actors **Jason Momoa**, who plays the heroic, half-human heir to the underwater kingdom of Atlantis, and **Amber Heard** as his warrior love interest, Mera. Created by **Kym Barrett** (*The Matrix Trilogy*, *The Amazing Spider-Man*), the shimmering suits led the picture to a **Costume Designers Guild** award nomination.

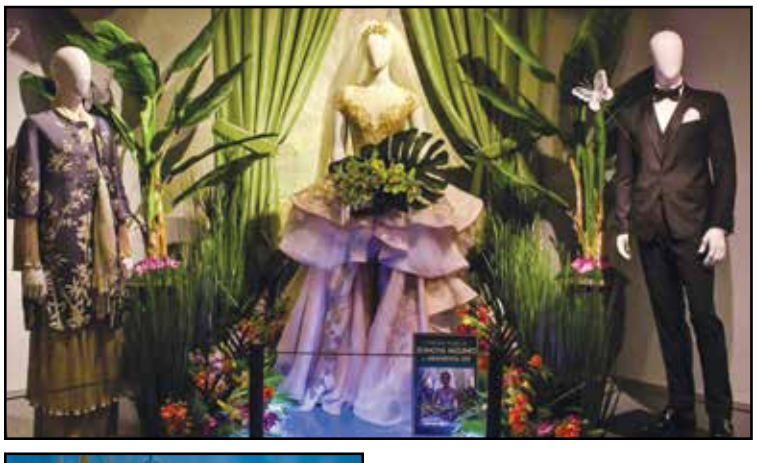
The studio tour's recreated settings from *Crazy Rich Asians* allow visitors to get up close to eight costumes from the film. They can peer inside the closet of Peik Lin (played by **Awkwafina**) and see the pant ensemble she wore to the cocktail party thrown by Nick Young (**Henry Golding**), as well as gaze at the gown from the high-end Italian fashion house **Missoni** donned by Rachel Chu (**Constance Wu**).

The exhibit also features dresses worn in the film's Singapore wedding scene by Nick's mother, Eleanor (**Michelle Yeoh**), and grandmother, Ah Ma (**Lisa Lu**), plus the wedding dress worn by Araminta Lee (**Sonoya Mizuno**).

In *A Star is Born*, **Bradley Cooper** and **Lady Gaga** provide a new take on the classic love story, playing fated singer-songwriters Jack and Ally. The studio tour honors the multi-award-nominated film by showcasing several of the actors' costumes — including those from a scene that unfolds at *The Grammy Awards* and Ally's performance at the **Shrine Auditorium** in Los Angeles. Also displayed are handwritten lyrics from the song "I'll Never Love Again," among other props.

For more about the tour and the studio's nearly 96-year history, visit the attraction's website.

•wbstudiotour.com



Among the latest exhibits at Warner Bros. Studio Tour Hollywood are costume highlights from *Aquaman* (left) and *Crazy Rich Asians* (above). COURTESY WARNER BROS. STUDIO TOUR HOLLYWOOD

The grand opening of the new attraction The Flyer – San Francisco, a flying theater attraction, took place in January on Pier 39, San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf. The attraction takes guests on a journey over San Francisco and surrounding area landmarks. COURTESY DREW ALTIZER PHOTOGRAPHY

Pier 39 opens The Flyer — San Francisco

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. — The grand opening of the new attraction **The Flyer – San Francisco,** a flying theater attraction, was held Jan. 10 at Pier 39, **San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf**.

The new attraction was created by **Triotech,** a worldwide attraction developer, in partnership with **W.A. Alter, Inc., of San Francisco.** It immerses guests of all ages, taking them soaring over some of the biggest San Francisco and surrounding area attractions and landmarks

"After operating businesses at Pier 39 for many years, I am thrilled to share this unbeatable attraction that not only hosts the world's best technology, but also highlights the many reasons to love San Francisco," said **John Alter,** owner of The Flyer – San Francisco.

The attraction features cinematic artistry and state-of-the-art HD film footage captured with the help of drones and helicopters and blended with computer-generated imagery (CGI). Within the venue, just beyond the ticket counter, is a mural of the San Francisco Bay, created by San Francisco-based artist and illustrator **Sir-ron Norris**, who was commissioned for the art piece.

While embarking on The Flyer – San Francisco, guests are first introduced to a few characters from the production through projection mapping technology. Guests will meet the attraction's mascot, which is a seagull.

After the introduction, guests go into the main theater where up to 28 can be seated. The riders are suspended on motion-based seats in front of a curved screen, 50 feet-by-22-feet in size. Guests soar over local locations such as the Golden Gate Bridge, Alcatraz, Coit Tower, Marin Headlands, Chinatown, the Castro, and more.

"We are thrilled to open this unique attraction here in San Francisco," said **Ernest Yale**, Triotech's founder, president and CEO. "Being able to see the city and the Bay Area in ways that are not possible through any other means make The Flyer — San Francisco a must see attraction for visitors and locals alike."

Tickets to the attraction are $25 for adults and $16 for children and are available now online or on site.

•theflyer-sanfrancisco.com

Lagotronics, Mack Rides create interactive adventure

THE NETHERLANDS — Mack Rides and Lagotronics Projects combined forces in creating a new ride concept: The Gamestormer. The media-based attraction combines the ride experience of the 'Seesturmbahn' from Mack Rides with a 360-degree immersive projection and interactive system from Lagotronics Projects. The addition of the scoring system and special effects ensure an immersive gaming experience. Within its compact footprint, the interactive ride experience can incorporate special effects such as water, light and scent, all of which can be triggered by the guests' score. COURTESY LAGOTRONICS

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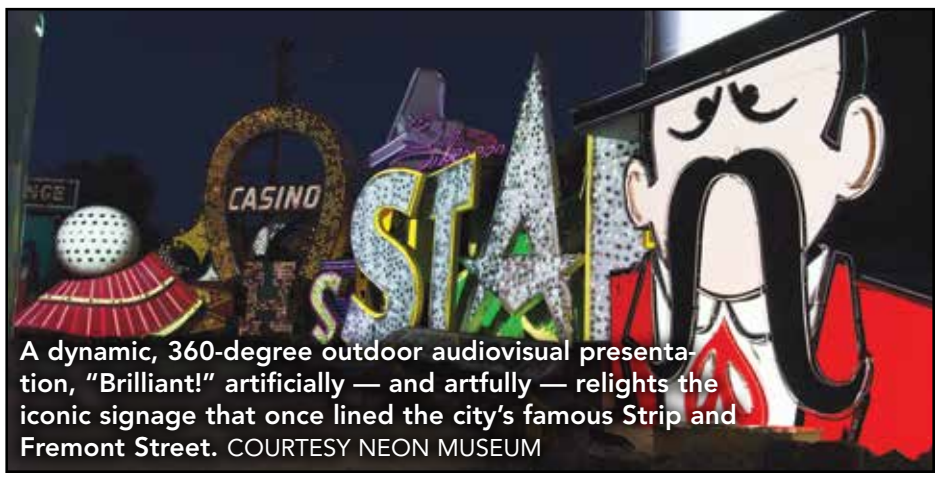
Neon Museum stirs Vegas nostalgia with vintage sign show

Year-old projection mapping spectacular 'Brilliant!' a big draw

AT: *Dean Lamanna*
dlamana@amusementtoday.com



A dynamic, 360-degree outdoor audiovisual presentation, "Brilliant!" artificially — and artfully — relights the iconic signage that once lined the city's famous Strip and Fremont Street. COURTESY NEON MUSEUM

Digital artist Craig Winslow (left) displays some of the tools he used to create the Neon Museum's nighttime spectacular. His work brings the vintage signs to flashing life. COURTESY NEON MUSEUM

LAS VEGAS — A popular attraction preserving Sin City's rich history of glitz, the **Neon Museum** has seen its attendance rise dramatically since the arrival of "Brilliant!" — a 360-degree audiovisual experience at the two-plus-acre repository of old signage located just north of downtown.

The spectacular nighttime show, which debuted in February 2018, utilizes projection mapping technology — a technique that creates augmented reality by aligning digital animation with physical objects — to reanimate 40 unrestored signs in the nonprofit museum. Incorporating archival footage from the **Las Vegas News Bureau**, the presentation transports guests back to the Vegas of yore as the iconic signs come to life accompanied by period music.

By the end of its fiscal year in mid-2018, the museum, boosted by the show, had welcomed a record 200,000 visitors — representing a 58 percent year-over-year attendance increase.

Rob McCoy, museum president and CEO, told *Amusement Today* that "Brilliant!" has brought needed glamour to the attraction's North Gallery, or Neon Boneyard Park, where unrestored signs in the collection are more informally displayed.

"It is the perfect complement to the other side of our museum, where our interpreters give a one-hour historical guided tour of the main collection," said McCoy. "We've combined our unique history with a bit of dazzle into one very special 'edutainment' presentation that appeals to everyone from art lovers to techno-geeks."

Road to re-illumination

"Brilliant!" is the brainchild of **Craig Winslow**, a digital artist and experiential designer based in Portland, Ore. Elected by the computer software giant **Adobe** as one of the company's 2016-17 creative residents, Winslow embarked on an artistic journey across the southwestern U.S. called "Light Capsules" that found him creating pop-up, one-night-only projection mapping shows that revived large ghost signs — faded, hand-painted advertising signs that can still be found on the sides of century-old brick buildings in some cities and towns.

The adventure, which took Winslow from Los Angeles to Austin, Texas, where Adobe scheduled him to speak at the annual multimedia conference and festival **South by Southwest**, made a fortuitous stop in Las Vegas in February 2017. Although the city, being relatively "young," didn't have any ghost signs to revive, Winslow was taken by the old signs he saw at the Neon Museum.

The artist emailed the facility, telling staff about his traveling project and how he wished to demonstrate the technology on its collection. "They were really confused at first, saying, 'We don't want you to mess up our signs,'" Winslow told *AT*. "And I kind of had to educate them on the concept and explain that it was non-damaging."

Projection mapping was a sensible approach to relighting the signs, which in actuality would cost many millions to restore, he pointed out. "Even if you refurbish them, you lose their patina and wornness. With projection mapping, there's just something kind of beautiful about showing the present and the past and the future all at once."

After doing his customary historical research to determine the proper original look and context of the signs, the artist computer-designed his animations and then set up a generator and some projectors in the museum's Neon Boneyard Park to show the staff, in a limited way, what he could do. Winslow said it opened a "magic time portal to the [artifacts'] former glory" in what essentially became another pop-up performance in his traveling series.

The next day, he received an excited message from museum CEO McCoy: "Our whole organization is buzzing about this. We have to make this permanent. What will that take?"

Nine months of hard, painstakingly detailed work, it would turn out.

"What was really exciting working with the Neon Museum was that it wasn't just one sign at a time that I would bring to life, but about 30 or 40 signs surrounding you completely," Winslow said. "People don't typically do this complex of an installation with mapping because it's hard to keep the [projection] alignment precise. If the projected light doesn't hit the bulbs and neon tubes in the signs perfectly, they don't illuminate perfectly."

That was just one of many challenges facing the artist when he undertook the project last May. Creating an intimate, immersive, theater-in-the-round-style experience in the otherwise exposed-to-the-elements, utility-free lot required careful planning along with a vision. And, while several signs needed some minor repositioning for optimal projection, a major rearrangement of the weathered, fragile, super-heavy structures was out of the question.

Still, Winslow scored when the museum allowed an addition to the existing Neon Boneyard Park display: four massive capital letters forming the word "STAR" from the 1958-built **Stardust Hotel & Casino**, which was demolished in 2007.

"They have a huge, previously unseen collection in storage because they just don't have the space," he said. "The letters became a really nice canvas to project historical content into."

Installing "Brilliant!" involved building two enclosed 20-foot-tall, climate-controlled towers in the center of the space to hold eight projectors, various audiovisual controls and other needed electronics. The artist worked with regional institution **YESCO** (a.k.a. Young Electric Sign Co.) on the structures and the needed underground service lines.

"I loved having YESCO involved because, historically, they're actually the ones who built all these signs back in the day," he said. "I gave them sort of a rough design of the towers and they handled the engineering. It was a big technical feat."

All that digital dazzle

For Winslow, a Maine native who graduated from Vermont's **Champlain College** and did brand-focused work for a design studio before striking out on his own, computer-rendering the visual elements of "Brilliant!" was the biggest — and most creative — task.

The artist used a relatively new mapping process called structured light scanning that projects a known pattern, such as grids or horizontal bars, onto a scene. The deformation that results when the patterns strike surfaces within the scene, such as bulbs, bent metal and broken neon tubes, allows for the precise calculation of depth and other topographical information used to shape the animation.

"When I did the original Neon Museum pop-up demonstration, I took photo references and animated over them, and then warped the animations into a final place — which is the usual projection mapping workflow," he explained, noting that he stepped-up the preparation and previsualization of the permanent installation with a combination of photography and drone video, enabling 3D computer modeling. "The tricky thing with 'Brilliant!' was that we have

▸ **See NEON, page 18**

Hard Rock Café guitar sign illuminated at Neon Museum

LAS VEGAS — After 1,650-man hours to rebuild and install, the re-electrified **Hard Rock Café** guitar sign was illuminated for the first time during a private event for **Neon Museum** donors and VIPs on March 4. The sign had been previously located in front of the Hard Rock Café for 27 years.

With approximately 4,110 feet of neon tubing and more than 700 individual neon units, the huge sign was divided into six pieces to be transported to the Neon Museum Boneyard from the **YESCO** (a.k.a. Young Electric Sign Company).

In its new Boneyard home, it joins many other historical Las Vegas neon signs where its history can be shared with guests and visitors from around the world.

Immersive butterfly attraction winging to Southern California

Wildlife exhibit aims to open in Buena Park later this year

BUENA PARK, Calif. — A multimillion-dollar attraction centered around an exotic, largely walk-through habitat for butterflies, hummingbirds, bees and other creatures is in the works near **Knott's Berry Farm**.

Called **Butterfly Palladium**, the 50,000-square-foot-plus complex will include sanctuaries for butterflies and bees, a 299-seat 3D movie theater, a 180-seat full-service restaurant, several casual dining options, a gift shop and a dramatic arched atrium capable of hosting special events. Educational components will be incorporated to draw students and encourage school visits.

The project is located in the heart of the city's revamped Beach Boulevard entertainment corridor — on the site once occupied by the famous **Movieland Wax Museum**, which closed in 2005 after 43 years of operation, and two smaller businesses. Its debut is expected by the year-end holidays.

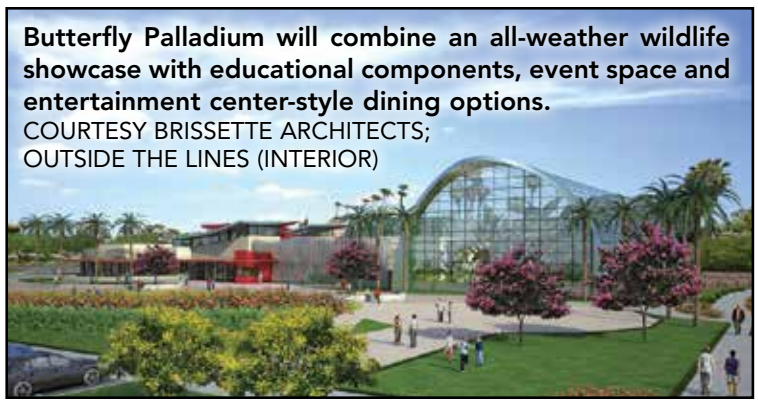
The attraction's environment is inspired by the rainforests of Costa Rica. Features appearing in the initial plans include a 45-foot-tall artificial mountain, waterfalls and 2,500 square feet of rockwork for artificial streams. **Outside the Lines**, a theming design and construction company headquartered in neighboring Anaheim, was tapped to create these interior elements.

The atrium portion of the complex was manufactured in Belgium and will be illuminated in changing hues at night. Replacing the iconic neon Movieland Wax Museum sign, which was removed last summer, will be an 80-foot-tall digital roadside sign with a high-resolution LED display and two giant butterfly figures.

Glendale, Ariz.-based **Craft Culinary Concepts** has signed on as the exclusive provider of food, beverage and event catering. The attraction's restaurant, Chrysalis, will offer a "California-centric" menu of farm-fresh offerings with locally and specially sourced ingredients.

Butterfly Palladium's developer is **Rubin Stahl**, a former president of **West Edmonton Mall** whose prior projects include zoos, aquariums and shopping centers in Canada and the U.S.; his wife, **Lila Stahl**, is serving as attraction president. Others involved in the endeavor are **Brissette Architects, Inc.**, of Scottsdale, Ariz.; landscape architects **Conceptual Design & Planning Co.** of Costa Mesa, Calif.; and general contractor **Acon Development, Inc.**, of Los Angeles.

—Dean Lamanna



Butterfly Palladium will combine an all-weather wildlife showcase with educational components, event space and entertainment center-style dining options.
COURTESY BRISSETTE ARCHITECTS; OUTSIDE THE LINES (INTERIOR)

Hollywood artist Tim Burton set to 'star' at museum

LAS VEGAS — Renowned American film director, producer, artist, writer and animator **Tim Burton** (*The Nightmare Before Christmas*, Disney's upcoming live-action *Dumbo* remake) will stage a four-month exhibition of his original fine art at the Neon Museum beginning Oct. 15.

Designed to take advantage of the museum's open-air spaces, the installation, called Tim Burton @ the **Neon Museum**, will be integrated with the existing sign collection. Burton intends for the exhibition to serve as a retrospective of his creative history as well as a celebration of his affection for the museum.

"To say were flattered that Tim chose our museum for this exhibition would be an understatement," said **Rob McCoy**, museum president and CEO. "But when you think about it, he is one of the few artists who can match the great imagination of Las Vegas."

Burton is credited with bringing worldwide attention to the Neon Museum with its appearance in his 1996 film *Mars Attacks!* He has staged popular exhibitions internationally in cities including New York, London, Brussels, Prague and Mexico City.

—Dean Lamanna

NEON

Continued from page 16

such a complex canvas of bulbs and neon in the Boneyard, and there's such a depth to it. It's not just like flat surfaces."

Through the deployment of Adobe Illustrator and other software programs, Winslow achieved authentic-looking neon tube lighting and flickering bulb effects that, along with archival video compositions, comprise the 30-minute presentation. The visuals were edited and time code-synched to vintage tunes, the selection of which was a project unto itself.

Winslow chose songs that evoked nostalgia and created narrative flow, consulting with McCoy and the museum staff to make sure he was including a range of music styles that represented the city's midcentury era and evolution. Among the tunes were are **The Chordettes**' "Mister Sandman," **Liberace**'s "Strangers in the Night" and **Elvis Presley**'s "Viva Las Vegas." **Frank Sinatra**'s "Luck Be a Lady" was a shoo-in, as the collection prominently features a sign from the **Lady Luck Casino Hotel** (1964-2006). The music track is delivered via 24 weatherproof, discreetly placed surround-sound speakers.

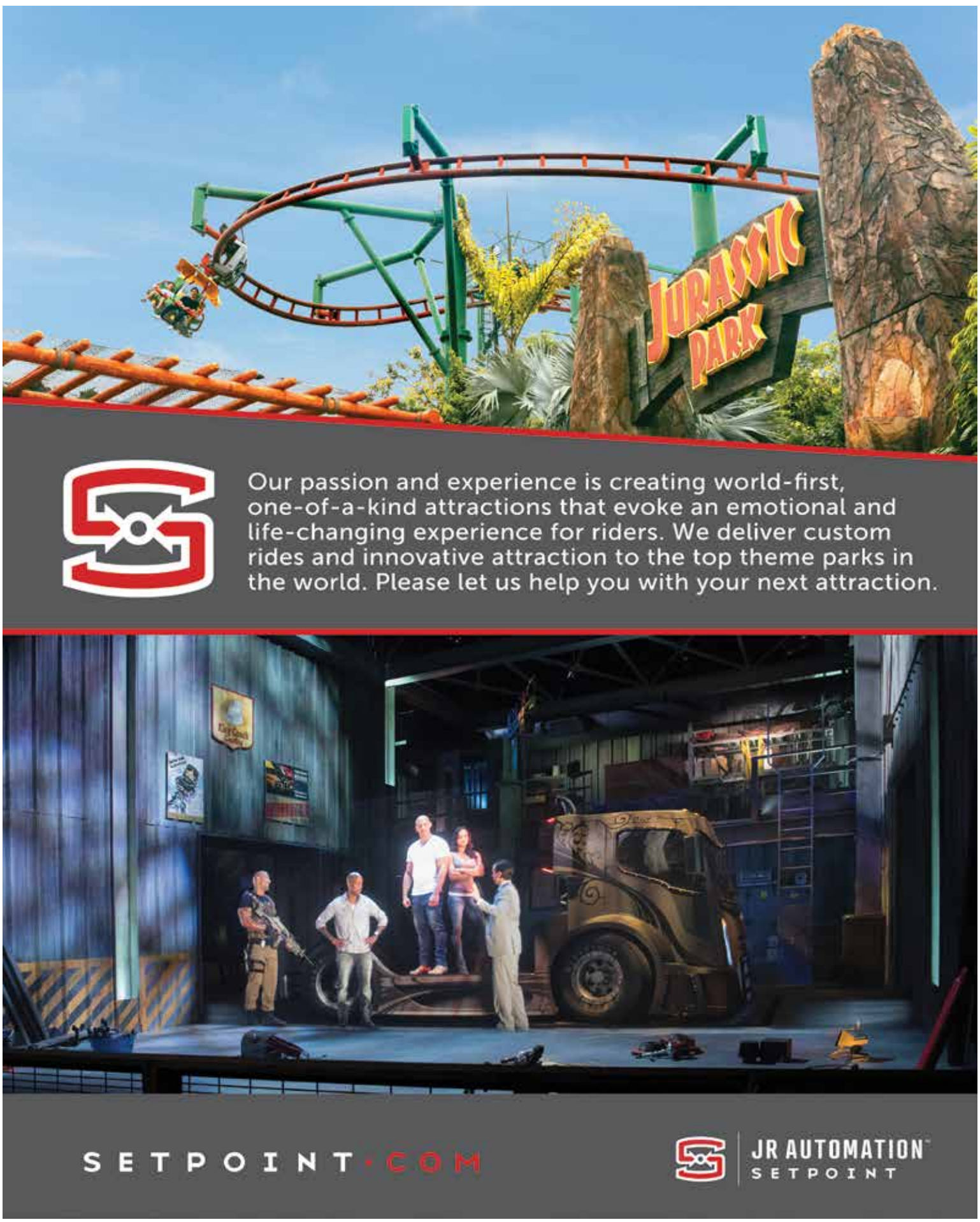
Stoking the public's curiosity in the city's history, according to the artist, was a major goal of the project, as was the creation of a shared augmented reality experience free of headsets or other gear.

"We wanted to make it not just a light show, but have something that was meaningful and educational," he said. "You don't have to wear anything, you don't have to be told how it works. You just have to experience it. Hopefully, by the end of the show, you're saying to the person next to you, 'I remember the **Binion's Gambling Hall** horseshoe sign!' And you're making memories with others right there."

The response to "Brilliant!," meanwhile, has blown Winslow away. "Seeing people dancing and reacting emotionally to it — that we've struck a chord — has been really satisfying."

• **neonmuseum.org**

The roadside sign for the Neon Museum's Boneyard Park, created from letters and elements of old Las Vegas signs, is an attraction unto itself.
AT/DEAN LAMANNA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Oldest continuously running livestock show a success for Talley Amusements

AT: *B. Derek Shaw*
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The Iron Dragon Roller Coaster, Drop Tower (left) and Giant Wheel were popular attractions at the long-running Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo.
AT/SAMMY PICCOLA

FORT WORTH, Texas — The 23-day **Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo** (FWSSR) enjoyed great turnout and participation. Held Jan. 18 through Feb. 9, the annual event showcases livestock, complete with rodeos, along with food and amusements. With an attendance of 1,216,140 (a slight increase of 1,350 people over 2018), the event featured a theme of "Old School Cool" this year.

"The North Texas economy remains strong," said **Matt Brockman**, communications manager. "We experienced favorable to ideal weather the first 20 days of our show. The last three we had some colder temperatures that likely moderated attendance."

The FWSSR offers visitors a chance to experience the unique western lifestyle surrounding the show, along with one-of-a-kind combination of education, tradition and Western heritage. The event has provided millions of dollars in grants and scholarships in its tenure and continues to provide hundreds of thousands of dollars annually to assist the future leaders of agriculture and livestock management.

Hometown carnival provider **Talley Amusements** covered the amusement area with 53 rides, 24 of which were kiddie. There were four new rides along the six-acre midway this year: Monster Trucks (**Wisdom Manufacturing**), Choo Choo Express (Wisdom), Ships Ahoy (**Larson International**) and Hurricane (**Battech**). The top three grossing rides were the Giant Wheel (**Lamberink**), Fast Trax Slide (**Fabbri**) and Iron Dragon Roller Coaster (**Pinfari**). This was the first spot of the year for the Fort Worth-based operation.

"Talley Amusements has provided our visitors with a fun, safe and clean environment and a great selection of rides for all ages of carnival midway goers for many years," said Brockman.

"We are proud to say that we have taken our midway completely cashier free. All digital tickets (**Magic Money**) were sold from self-service kiosks that accept cash/credit. Our carnival ride gross set an all-time record. We had some cold weather but that is expected at this time of year in Fort Worth," said Mary Talley. In addition to being selected as one of two finalists for the 2020 **Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo**, Talley Amusements also picked up two new spots this year: the **Ohio State Fair** in Columbus and the **Delta Fair** in Memphis, Tenn.

The FWSSR unveiled a $16 million renovation of their Cattle Barn 1 and Poultry Barn. "The renovation included enhanced lighting, electrical upgrades, improved ventilation as well as wider aisles benefitting not only the exhibitor, but the visitor, too. New and enlarged restrooms were welcomed improvements," said Brockman. This was the second phase of a four-phase renovation of their livestock facilities.

The project also included the relocation and expansion of Stockman's Café, a 24-hour dining facility. Offering a wider selection of food choices and accommodating approximately 150 diners in a comfortable setting, the café includes a more spacious food prep area and kitchen designed with food safety and quality as a priority.

Coburn's Catering handled 90% of the food operations at the show. BBQ brisket, jalapeno cheese sausage, calf fries (veal testicles) with cocktail sauce, half pound burgers made to order and a chicken sandwich called the Brandioso were all on the menu. Breakfast included made-to-order breakfast bowls.

"We are 100 percent family owned," said **Steve Coburn.** "We are third generation with the fourth generation starting to get involved." Coburn's Catering, has been serving smoked meats and managing food concessions at the show since 1946. Typically, Steve, his parents, his sister, his wife and their kids could all be found working throughout the grounds.

"There is considerable excitement and anticipation regarding the Stock Show's first year in Dickies Arena," said Brockman, regarding the upcoming changes at the FWSSR's facility. "The Will Rogers Coliseum has hosted our professional rodeo performances for 76 years. Next year, we'll move into our new Dickies Arena, scheduled for completion in November. The Will Rogers Coliseum will continue to be used for a variety of Stock Show activities and shows including youth rodeo, equestrian events, livestock shows and other features."

The 2020 dates are Jan. 17 through Feb. 8.

• **fwssr.com**

The midway went completely cashier-free in 2019, with digital tickets available from Magic Money self-service kiosks that accepted cash and credit.
AT/SAMMY PICCOLA

Talley Amusements provided the midway, including 24 kiddie rides.
AT/SAMMY PICCOLA

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Showmen and Pa. Farm Show team-up, raise scholarship funds

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Albert Stull and Darlene Packer, both with Packer's Concessions and Allen Bartlebaugh, Bartlebaugh Amusements, took a shift staffing the farm tractor ride (left). Eric Beagle of Knoebels Amusement Resort (center) caught up on his *Amusement Today* reading between crowds at the 103rd Pennsylvania Farm Show. Natalie Conte of DelGrosso's Park & Laguna Splash (right) was on hand to represent the entire DelGrosso's family of companies. AT/B. DEREK SHAW

HARRISBURG, Pa. – During the 103rd **Pennsylvania Farm Show**, the **Pennsylvania State Showman's Association** (PSSA) worked in conjunction with the **Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Farm Show Foundation** to raise scholarship funds for deserving youth to further their education in both the agriculture and amusement industries.

At this year's show, held Jan. 5–12, 2019, more than $48,000 was split equally between both programs – 24 scholarships via the Farm Show Foundation and eight scholarships awarded through PSSA. Money going into the scholarship programs was raised by offering rides for a $3.00 donation. Attractions included a **Hampton** farm tractor flat ride (converted by **Dalton)** in the **Giant Foods** Expo Hall, supplied by **Powers & Thomas Midway Entertainment**, Wilmington, N.C. and — in the Main Hall — a 1946 **Allen Herschel** art deco-styled carousel was provided by Steve Swika, **SwikaS Amusements**, Scott Township., Pa.

A combined effort, the rides were staffed by more than 90 people from various carnival operations and food concessionaires. The tractor ride was staffed completely by **Bartlebaugh Amusements** staff, while the carousel had volunteer help from many carnivals and concessionaires.

"We've done very well for two reasons," stated **Allen Bartlebaugh** with Bartlebaugh Amusements. "We've raised our pricing a little bit on the rides, which nobody seems to mind. The scholarship fund should have a little more money to give out a couple more scholarships next year."

In the commercial exhibitor area of the Main Hall, **DelGrosso's Park & Laguna Splash** was represented by its Assistant Director of Aquatics, **Natalie Conte**. "We are offering sauce coupons, as well as different recipe cards of things to use with our sauces," she explained. The park also made available "buy two, get two free" coupons for potential guests. Rounding out the Delgrosso Family of Companies was information about the pizza and hoagie program that organizations can sell as part of **DelGrosso Foods**' Marianna's Fundraisers.

Also, in the commercial exhibitor area, **Knoebels Amusement Resort** was represented by **Erik Beagle**, guest relations / educational outreach coordinator. "We are focusing on fundraising opportunities for local schools and charitable organizations," he said. The park offers opportunities to raise funds either by selling park tickets or through a "Dine and Donate" effort at its **Nickel Plate Restaurant**. Knoebels staff was promoting the park, camp-ground and golf course during the eight days, handing out scratch-off game cards good for free tickets as well as discounted tickets and wristbands.

The Pennsylvania Farm Show is the nation's largest indoor agricultural event. It features 6,000 animals, 10,000 competitive exhibits and 300 commercial exhibitors within one million-square-feet of space on 23 acres occupying 11 halls and 3 arenas. During its eight-day run in early January, the estimated attendance is over a half-million people.

•farmshow.pa.gov

Nearly 1,600 attend 107th PSACF/PSSA convention in Hershey

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HERSHEY, Pa. – The 32,000 square foot Great American Hall at **Hershey Lodge and Convention Center** was the venue for the **Pennsylvania State Association of County Fairs (PSACF)** and the **Pennsylvania State Showmen's Association (PSSA)** annual convention. With the theme "Fairs Feature Agriculture," the trade show took place January 23 – 26, with 165 vendors.

Carnival operators **C&L Shows**, **Dreamland Amusements**, **Houghton Enterprises**, **Lisko Family Midway Amusements**, **Penn Valley Shows**, **Powers & Thomas Midway Entertainment** and **Tons of Fun Shows** all had exhibit booths, with many providing hospitality rooms alongside both presenting organizations.

Education was a key component of the event and seminars and daily workshops were popular. With topics including "What Could Shut Down Your Fair?", "Natural Disasters, Now What?" and "Are You OSHA Audit Ready?", most of the educational seminars enjoyed standing room only.

"We've had very good remarks about the convention itself," said **Harry Reffner**, PSACF secretary. "We have people from Maryland, New York, Ohio – so it's going very good. [We've] received many comments stating 'we're the best on the east coast.'"

This year nightly sold-out banquets, with a different focus each evening, completed the schedule of events. Wednesday evening featured an entertainment showcase including 17 acts — many of whom had a presence on the trade show floor — providing music and other entertainment.

During Thursday evening's banquet, hosted by the PSACF, **Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture** Secretary **Russell Redding** remarked to the attendees: "Fairs bind us. They put the focus on community, celebrating accomplishments of our neighbors and bringing us all together. We're all looking forward to the stories you tell, and inspire, in 2019 and beyond."

Dr. Sally Nolt with the **Elizabethtown Fair** was announced as the 2019 PSCAF president and **Sam Zuffato** with **Sykesville Ag & Youth Fair** is the new vice president. **Dr. David Reese**, with the **Tioga County Fair** was honored as the fair person of the year. **Skelly's Amusements**' **Rick Marchione**, another honorary member of PSACF, served as the master of ceremonies.

With a casino night theme, Friday evening's PSSA banquet was coordinated by **Christine Houghton** with **Houghton Enterprises**. During the event, **Jason Bartlebaugh** from **Bartlebaugh Amusements** was named Showman of the Year. A fourth-generation showman, he is one of the youngest to receive the award. The **Pennsylvania Farm Show Foundation** was presented a check for $24,335 — half the proceeds from the Showman's Herschel carousel and Hampton/Dalton tractor ride that operated during the **Pennsylvania Farm Show.** The banquet also included the installation of the 2019 PSSA President, **Allen Bartlebaugh** with Bartlebaugh Amusements, Middleburg, Pa.

The trade show floor (left) was bustling with activity and 165 exhibitors. Santillo's Vince and Gretchen Martino and Houghton Enterprises, LLC's Jimmy and Christine Houghton got into the casino night theme at PSSA's Friday evening banquet. AT/B. DEREK SHAW; COURTESY DONNA KRAMER/PSSA

The 33rd annual Queen Coronation banquet took place Saturday evening. "Pennsylvania agriculture invests heavily in the human capital of its future — our youth — through activities like the Pa. Fair Queen program," Secretary Redding said. A total of 59 Fair Queens from throughout the state were vying for the title. **Mikara Anderson** representing the **Huntington County Fair** took those honors. Anderson is a senior and will be attending Penn State University this fall, majoring in animal science.

"We have a few things on the horizon, with ride safety and food safety," offered incoming PSSA president Bartlebaugh. "We'd like to improve our membership, improve our numbers. It always helps."

The 2020 edition takes place January 22-25, once again at the Hershey Lodge.

•pafairs.org
•pashowmen.com

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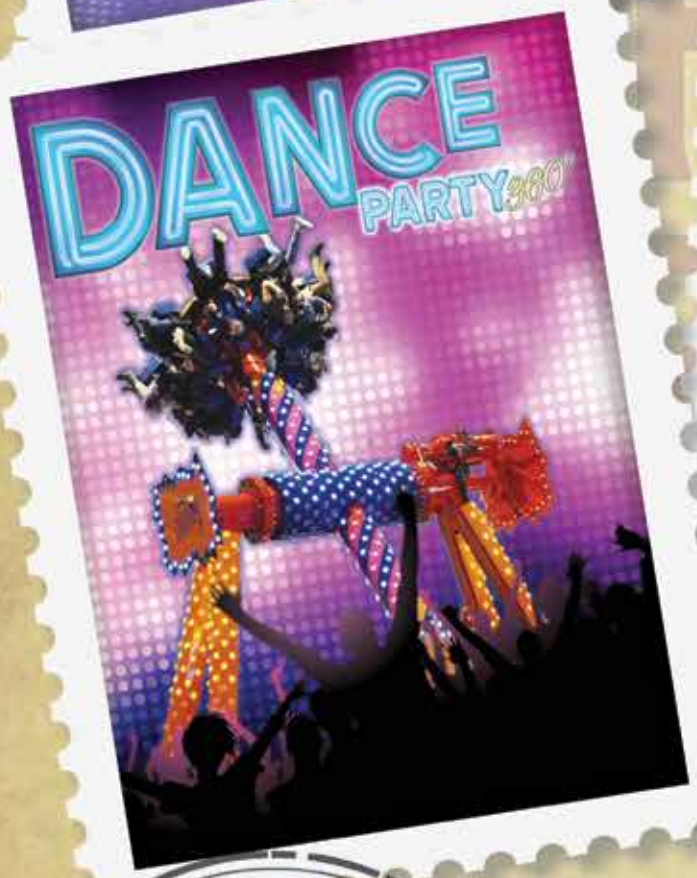

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Davis ready to take Wisdom Rides forward

MERINO, Colo. — Jared Davis (right) took over the reins of Wisdom Rides last fall from his uncle, Victor Wisdom. Since then, he brought in Jeff Miller, left, as his director of sales. Davis said his uncle is not leaving the company, but wanted to step back. He will be involved in the company's ride sales and repairs. Davis is still formulating future plans for the company. He has been running rideparts.com, a company he and his mother, Carol Wisdom, started in 2011 to primarily support Wisdom Rides. AT/GARY SLADE

MIDWAYSCENE

AT: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

Utah is one of six states that have no state agency with jurisdiction over amusement rides. That may be about to change as Utah State Representative **Val Potter** is sponsoring an amusement ride safety bill in the 2019 General Session. A similar bill — that would have called for mandatory inspections, created a commission for reporting and shutdown certain injuries and would give the public a place to report dangerous situations — did not pass in 2018.

In a **KUTV-TV** investigative report, **Lagoon Amusement Park** however released the following statement:

"Lagoon is not opposed to oversight and currently operates with oversight, both public and private. Lagoon has supported Representative Potter's effort and has spent enormous hours and resources working with him to succeed in implementing some of the strongest ride safety legislation in the country. It is our understanding that Representative Potter proposes that these regulations be under the jurisdiction of the **Department of Labor**. However, Lagoon and Utah's ski resorts already have amusement rides, which are currently regulated by the **Department of Transportation**, Utah Passenger Ropeway Safety Committee. We feel that the Department of Transportation is the best place for the bill to reside and this is where our only disagreement lies. Lagoon has always been supportive of any effort to improve safety and do not oppose the bill as we understand it."

The other five states without state amusement ride safety oversight are Alabama, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada and Wyoming.

•

Pennsylvania carnival **Tons of Fun** (under **BJP Rides**) is taking delivery on a wheel that will be sent to the **Port of Baltimore** in March by **Bojux**, a Czech Republic manufacturer. Dubbed the Keystone Wheel, it will be the largest portable traveling wheel in Pennsylvania at 80 feet tall with gondola seats and 18 sweeps — all on one trailer.

"This is exactly what we were looking for," said **Benjamin Pfeffer**, general manager of the Douglasville, Pa.-based show. "We are happy with the quality of the build."

Rickie Moore with **Moore's Greater Shows** of Lyford, Texas, is the U.S. representative for Bojux, which suggested the wheel to Pfeffer. The lighting package from **R2M2 Energy Solutions** was coordinated by **Robbie MagDule**.

There will be a special Keystone Wheel-lighting ceremony on April 24, the night before the five-day **Amity Fire and Rescue Company** carnival opens in Douglasville, Pa., where the ride will debut.

•

In March, **Gene Dean**, owner of **Fiesta Shows/Dean Enterprises**, Seabrook, N.H., will be inducted into the **New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (NEAAPA)** Hall of Fame during their 106th Anniversary Education Conference & Annual Meeting.

"It's a nice honor after all of these years in the amusement business," Gene said of the accolade. With more than a half-century in the industry, Gene got his start at Salisbury Beach, Mass., where the family once operated 38 games and a few rides at the seaside resort community. Fiesta Shows is touted as New England's largest carnival, carrying more than 70 rides playing a regional route spanning 35 weeks. Gene and his wife of 52 years, **Mary**, enjoy spending time with their family, including grandchildren who are now being groomed in the family's enterprises.

•

After 19 years with **Beverly Taylor** at the helm, Harrison's **Northwest Arkansas District Fair** has a new fair manager. Taylor will still serve on the board during this transition year as **Allison Black** takes over the post. Black has the requisite experience for her new role running the eight-day fair, as a district fair board member and following her work with the **Newton County Fair**. Black started her position earlier this year. The 2019 edition takes place September 15 to 21.

•

Kevin Mitchell is the new general manager for the **New Jersey State Fair/Sussex County Farm and Horse Show**, in Augusta. A 4-H agent for Sussex County and having served for a few years as a member of the board of directors for **4-H**, Mitchell has experience with the operation.

Mitchell succeeds **Gary Larson**, who served as general manager the past three years. Larson resigned in mid-November, being the fifth GM the past decade. Mitchell holds bachelor's and master's degrees in animal science from **Rutgers University**.

The position became effective January 22. The 2019 10-day fair is scheduled for Aug. 2-11 with **Reithoffer Shows** operating the ride midway.

•

Drew Expositions is adding a couple new rides to its lineup for this season. Expected to arrive in the second half of the year is an RL22 **Lamberink** wheel from The Netherlands. In addition to the wheel is The Barnyard, a family ride from an Italian manufacturer.

•

During the recent **IISF Convention and Trade Show**, **National Independent Concessionaires Association (NICA)** held its three day event at the **Sheraton Tampa East Hotel**. Various workshops and seminars, along with a trade show and banquet were the key activities. NICA sponsored the Business Expo while **Fare Foods** headed up the Food Show portion. The two-evening trade show featured nearly 50 booths from various food purveyors, suppliers and related industries, showcasing the newest products available for 2019. Attendance was strong for the entire event.

Since 1993, NICA has worked with independent concessionaires to open lines of communication with fairs and festivals.

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Royal Caribbean Cruises renovates private island paradise

AT: *Jeffrey Seifert*
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MIAMI, Fla. — A year ago, **Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd** (RCCL) announced that CocoCay, the company's private island in the Bahamas would undergo a massive, $200 million renovation adding amenities never before seen in the cruise world. The project was to be completed in phases with most of the new attractions, including a new water park, scheduled to open this spring.

CocoCay, which is actually Little Stirrup Cay Island, was acquired in 1985 from a private owner by **Eastern/Admiral Cruise Lines**, one of the first to lease an island for exclusive use by guests on board its ships. The 125-acre island was known for its beautiful nature trails and coral basin from which snorkelers could view rays, manatee, numerous tropical fish and colorful coral. Royal Caribbean assumed the lease of the island when it merged with Admiral Cruises in 1988. Both brands operated for a few years, but as Royal Caribbean's long-range plans focused on obtaining larger ships, the Admiral brand was discontinued in 1992 and its ships were sold off.

Over the years a number of activities had been added to the island, including kayaking, parasailing, scuba diving, and **WaveRunner**/personal watercraft (PWC) piloting. The island was frequently visited by Royal Caribbean and Celebrity cruise ships (also owned by RCCL) which would anchor off the island. Passengers were brought ashore by ship tenders.

That changed in January with the installation of a pier that can accommodate even the largest Oasis-class ships. Previously, RCCL's larger ships did not anchor at the island as tendering thousands of people to the shore was impractical for a day stop.

In keeping with the RCCL's philosophy that bigger is better — the company owns the four largest cruise ships at sea — the island's attractions

These aerial views show all of the activities available to guests at Royal Caribbean's Perfect Day CocoCay.
COURTESY ROYAL CARIBBEAN CRUISES

are full of superlatives such as "record-breaking, highest, tallest and largest." The official title of the new island paradise is Perfect Day at CocoCay.

Perhaps the most significant addition to the island is the Thrill Waterpark which will include two waterslide towers with a total of 13 slides all provided by **WhiteWater West**. The Daredevil's Tower complex features seven body slides including what is claimed to be North America's tallest waterslide. Named Daredevil's Peak, it reaches a height of 135 feet. Also included are two drop slides, two high-speed slides, and coiling body slides with translucent sections.

The Family Tower includes a sphere-boomerang combination slide, a constrictor slide and four-lane Whizzard mat racer slide.

An adventure pool includes obstacles that guests will have to bounce, climb or swing their way through. A wave pool — one of the largest in the Caribbean — provides consistent waves for rollicking fun, unlike the island beaches, where the waters are typically very calm.

Two waterplay structures and a spontaneous geyser will give everyone the opportunity to get drenched without even entering the water park. As guests arrive at the island they are greeted by a temperamental geyser that shoots water 82 feet into the air, whenever it feels like it. Captain Jack's Galleon has more than 30 water cannons, slides, rope features, and a splash pad. Splashaway Bay, is specifically designed to keep the kids entertained with fountains, pools, water cannons, two tipping buckets and five waterslides.

Elsewhere on the island, those not wishing to partake in the activities at a water park have plenty of options from which to choose.

The Oasis Lagoon is a sprawling freshwater pool — said to be the largest in the Caribbean — with a gentle sloped entry, making it available to all guests. Multiple coves, each with a different vibe, provide a variety of experiences. Some sections have a swim-up bar, others are great for floating. Guests can relax in one of the water lounge chairs at the pool's edge or an umbrella chair a little farther back. Those desiring some privacy can rent a daybed and cabana complete with attendant service.

For cruise passengers who prefer a natural experience, beaches surround most of the island. The South Beach is where guests will find most of the action with volleyball, beachside basketball, fitness classes, paddle boarding, Zorb balls and glass-bottom kayaks. Next to the South Beach is the Coco Beach Club with luxurious over-the-water cabanas, beachside cabanas, a day spa, an infinity edge pool and exclusive dining at The Grille at Coco Beach, featuring Mediterranean cuisine.

On the other side of the island is the Chill Island beach with daybeds, cabanas, clamshell chairs, snorkeling and PWCs. Chill Grill, the largest dining venue on the island, offers Caribbean-style bites.

Sailing high above the island are two attractions: A 1,600 foot zip line that crisscrosses the island from a 50-foot-tall starting point. Up, Up and Away, a tethered helium balloon ride, lifts guests to a dizzying height of 450 feet — the highest vantage point in the Bahamas.

Other newly added island attractions and amenities include multiple restaurants. Captain Jack's bar and dining venue is designed as a rowboat with waterfront views, serving beverages and fast-food items like chicken wings and steak fries. Skipper's Grill serves fast-food including sandwiches, burgers, tacos and salads. Also new is the food bar Snack Shack. Scattered throughout the island are several walk-up beach bars.

Tram service is available to whisk guests around the island.

Many of the experiences at CocoCay are complimentary including the Oasis Lagoon, Chill Island and the South Beach, as well as the Galleon and Splashaway Bay water play areas. Also included are meals at the Skipper's Grill, Chill Grill and Snack Shacks. Most of the thrill attractions — the Thrill Waterpark; Up, Up and Away; zip line; and also the beach rentals such as kayaks, snorkels, PWCs, Zorb balls, etc. come with an upcharge. Cabanas, daybeds and beach umbrellas are also priced extra and can be reserved before docking. Entrance to the Coco Beach Club requires an admission and dining at Captain Jacks is priced a la carte.

The first ship scheduled to visit the new "Perfect Day at CocoCay" is *Navigator of the Seas* — during a three-day Bahamas cruise May 3 to May 6, 2019.

RCCL has announced plans to build permanent accommodations on CocoCay allowing its suite passengers to stay on the island overnight, or longer. The concept includes premium cabanas serving passengers on any of the RCCL ships calling at CocoCay.

Perfect Day at CocoCay, Bahamas, is the first of RCCL's new Perfect Day Island Collection, a series of private island destinations around the world.

"Our destinations are an equally important part of the cruise vacation," said **Michael Bayley**, president and CEO, Royal Caribbean International. "We are introducing Perfect Day Island Collection to ensure that we deliver the most memorable vacation for adventure seekers on land, as well as on board our ships."

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AT: Jeffrey L. Seifert
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

The board of supervisors of Washington County, Va., recently voted to support **Johnson Commercial Development's** (JCD) plans to construct a hotel and water park resort. Washington County is part of the Johnson City/Kingsport/Bristol, Tenn. "Tri-Cities" area located in southwest Virginia and northeast Tennessee. The resort is an expansion of **The Pinnacle**, a 250-acre mixed use development located in Bristol, Tenn., which includes a shopping mall anchored by a **Bass Pro Outdoor World** shop, movie theaters, and numerous restaurants. The hotel and water park resort would be developed on an additional 350 acres that extend over the state line into Washington County. Developer **Steve Johnson** said he plans to invest $239 million in the first phase of the development. He asked Washington County to provide $10 million in infrastructure improvements such as storm drainage and paving. The development calls for the aforementioned hotel and water park along with a 15,000-seat amphitheater and an adventure park with zip lines, a mountain coaster, ropes course, go karts, dining and retail.

•

The city-owned indoor water park, **Epic Waters**, Grand Prairie, Texas, christened its outdoor wave pool with an Epic Plunge event on Feb. 8. Participants who took the plunge received a long-sleeved T-shirt, hot chocolate and all-day admission to Epic Waters indoor waterpark. The "polar plunge" may not have rivaled icy plunges in the north, but it was cold by Texas standards, with temperatures not even reaching 40 degrees.

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Tidal Cove Water Park at the **JW Marriott Miami Turnberry Resort & Spa**, Aventura, Fla. is expected to open the first quarter of this year. The outdoor water park is bringing to the hotel resort, several high-profile attractions not typically associated with a Marriott property. **WhiteWater West** has supplied the park with a Master Blaster uphill water slide, Constrictor, Boomerango, mat racing Whizzard slide and two Aqua Drop body slides. Also added to the park is a **FlowRider** Triple surfing simulator, 4,000-square-foot kids pool and an aquatic play structure.

The new water park connects to the existing zero-entry pool and lazy river. Once complete, the combined water amenities area will include five acres of pool deck with hundreds of deck chairs, 25 luxury cabanas, two private-event lawns, retail shops, a light-fare poolside restaurant and upscale dining at the Surf House, which features a two-story open-air deck with seating for 142 guests.

Tidal Cove Water Park is part of a multimillion-dollar renovation and expansion at the resort that also brought the addition of the 325-room Orchid Tower, nearly doubling the capacity of the resort.

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Six Flags Hurricane Harbor, Jackson, N.J., recently announced the addition of the Calypso Springs Activity Pool. This largest expansion in 19 years will add a 100,000-gallon beach-entry-style pool with a central obelisk fountain that includes a spontaneously erupting geyser. Also included will be a new dining location; a large sun deck with hundreds of chairs, oversized umbrellas, and Bimini shade covers that will be available for rent.

•

The parks and recreation department of Wichita, Kan., recently unveiled design plans for the nine splash sparks that will become part of the city's aquatic program aimed at helping kids cool down as temperatures soar. Each of the splash pads will have its own theme and a unique design. The designs range from a giant scorpion spewing water in a desert-themed oasis to a rainforest theme to Egyptian middle-eastern ruins. Being in Kansas means, of course, there has to be a tribute to Oz, so Aley Park will include a yellow brick road, ruby slipper slide, and an emerald city fountain. At Edgemoor Park, kids will be able to climb on soft-surfaced Jellybeans in one of two bowls. Other splash pads will include an aviation theme with aircraft fountains, a pioneer theme which will include a prairie schooner play structure, engineering theme with fountains based on the shape of a water molecule, and an Aztec theme featuring a stone-like head of Tlaloc, the Aztec god of thunder and lightning.

•

The delayed indoor water park under development by the Otoe-Missouria Tribe at its **7 Clans First Council Casino Hotel**, was expected to open as this issue went to print. The 20,000-square-foot water park with a 329-foot lazy river and multiple slides was originally scheduled to open in December 2018. The water park was part of an expansion of the hotel properties with the hopes of creating a destination that would attract families. The expansion includes the addition of suites and themed rooms to both the Beachfront and Oceanside hotels, new restaurants, an arcade and the water park. The casino is located in Oklahoma, north of Newkirk, near the Kansas state line.

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BUSINESS & NEWSMAKERS

▸ ON THE MOVE — page 34 / OBITUARIES — page 35 / MARKET WATCH — page 37

51st IISF Show boasts more attractions

AT: *B. Derek Shaw*
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RIVERVIEW, Fla. — Heralded as the largest carnival trade show in the Unites States, **the International Independent Showmen's Foundation (IISF)** annual Super Trade Show & Extravaganza delivered to the delight of more than 7,300 attendees. Held early each February, the show provides four days of outdoor and indoor exhibiting rides and suppliers along with other ancillary products and services all designed to help get showmen ready for the upcoming season.

Despite a few early snags — poor drainage in the parking lots, the registration process being slowed by a new system — things ran rather smoothly during the event. Outdoors, there were more than 30 rides from a few dozen manufacturers with new companies in attendance, including numerous suppliers from the Czech Republic.

"Attendance has been pretty good, despite a little bit of wetness in the parking lots the first couple of days," said 2019 IISA president, **Jeffrey Richards**. Providing perspective, he added "There are more and more ride manufacturers from overseas. It helps gives us more exhibitors."

One of the larger items outside was a four-story fun house built by **Fun Light Amusements**. After acquiring it, **Adam Swika**, principal of **Adam Swika Shows** talked about his investment. "It's the second one ever built. It takes a good while to get through it. I dedicated it to my grandfather, the late Steve Swika, Jr. and Jackie Swika (grandmother)."

Dubbed "The Jurassic Excape," it features 21 tricks with eight being mechanical, themed to the dinosaur era. With a four person crew, set up takes four hours and tear down three hours, depending on the spot. Swika, fourth generation in the business, explained the reason for this particular attraction, "I just always wanted to have my own fun house. When my grandfather purchased the **Owen Trailers** Monkey Maze, I was made the manager and foreman. I just wanted to top that. I've now been able to realize my dream of owning a big, gigantic, fun house." With this purchase, Swika now offers five rides.

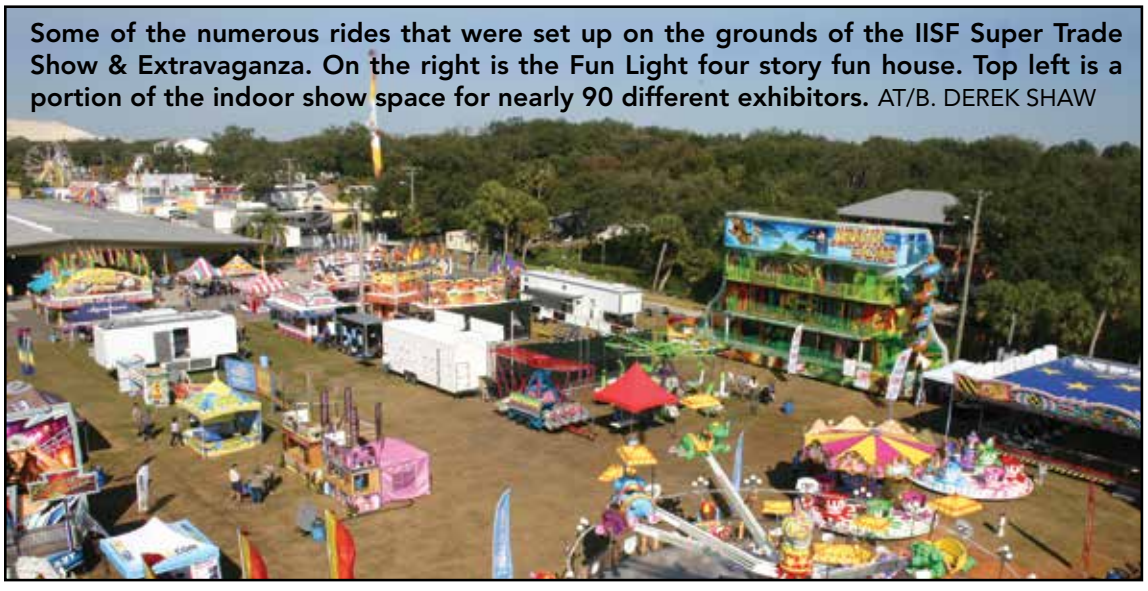
Wadkins Expo Wheels did sell a few rides, however, its president, **Roger Wadkins, Sr.**, feels sales could be stronger. "There's a lot of interest. Everyone is shy on pulling the trigger." Much of the buyer insecurity may be due to the extremely wet 2018 season and the uncertainty of getting enough foreign workers through the H2B program.

"As far as sales, 70 percent of the industry was here. I think you do have to be here," said **Len Soled**, president, **Rides-4-U**, summing up the show from his perspective. "We did sell a number of pieces here, so we're happy about that. Based on H2B, that issue [regarding] employment, people are holding back. We're hoping that clears up. If that does, we see a lot of other future sales here in the next 30 to 60 days. We're optimistic."

Amusement Entertainment Risk Insurance Associates (AERIA), **Concept 1900 Entertainment** (from France), **Cool-A-Zone**, **Eye Candy Inflatables**, **Jung-Max Rides**, **Kingpin TV**, **Midway Magazine**, **and Total Insight Screening** were all new exhibitors as part of the show this year.

With topics including

▸ See IISF, page 30



Some of the numerous rides that were set up on the grounds of the IISF Super Trade Show & Extravaganza. On the right is the Fun Light four story fun house. Top left is a portion of the indoor show space for nearly 90 different exhibitors. AT/B. DEREK SHAW

IISF Show sales activity

A.R.M. (US)
Powers Great American Midways – Sky Hawk

BOJUX
1st Class Amusements – Miami (Crazy Dance)
Jessop Amusements – Miami
Jolly Amusements – Miami
Moore's Greater Shows – Kids Carousel
NAME – Miami
Tons of Fun Shows – 25m Wheel

Dalton Kid Rides
Mitchell Brothers Shows – Farm Tractor
Wee Entertainment – Jump Cycle

Fun Light Manufacturing
Adam Swika Shows – Four Story Fun House

Gosetto (via **Intermark**)
Fun Spot, Orlando – Three Story Fun House (New York, N.Y.)

Ital International, LLC
Fun Spot Orlando – 28m Tech Park Wheel
West Coast Amusements – Street Fighter

KMG International
Big Rock Amusements – Freak Out
Deggeller Attractions – Space Port (Speed)
Otterbacher Shows – Surf Ride

Kolmax Plus
Browns Amusements – Dragon Coaster
Dreamland Amusements – Jumbo Elephant
I Land Rides, LLC – Jumbo Elephant, Tea Cup, Wheel, Dragon Coaster
Jessop Amusements – Ferris Wheel, bumper cars
Modern Midways – Dragon Coaster (Jung Max)
PBJ Happee Day Shows – Jumbo Elephant
Powers & Thomas Midway Ent. – Jumbo Elephant, Dragon Coaster
Powers Great American Midways – Dragon Coaster
Ray Cammack Shows – Tea Cup

Luna Park
Anderson Midway LLC – Circus Train
Big Round Wheel Amusements – 50' wheel
Casey's Rides, Cole's Shows, Frazier Shows – 50' wheel
Skerbeck Entertainment – Children's Carousel

Rides-4-U, Inc.
Beauce Carnival – Crazy Cabs
Butler Amusements – Crazy Cabs
Houghton Enterprises – Frog Hopper, Samba Balloon (used)
Majestic Midways – Crazy Cabs
Skellys Amusements – Air Show (Mini Pirate)
World's Finest Shows – Crazy Cabs

Wadkins Expo Wheel Inc.
Beauce Carnival – Expo Wheel
Fun Show Amusements, Quebec – Expo Wheel
PBJ Happee Day Shows – Expo Wheel
West Coast Amusements – Expo Wheel

Wisdom Rides of America
Coleman Brothers Shows – Himalaya
Powers Great American Midways – Alien Abduction
Wade Shows – Sizzler, Starship

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Premier Parks contracts to operate City Museum

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — **Premier Parks, LLC**, has announced it will assume operation and management of **City Museum** in St. Louis, Mo.

"We are incredibly excited to add the creativity and uniqueness of City Museum to our portfolio of entertainment facilities," said Kieran Burke, chairman and CEO of Premier Parks. "We love the vision of founders **Bob** and **Gail Cassilly**. The ability to operate a must-see attraction in the vibrant downtown of St. Louis is a welcome opportunity."

Burke said they planned to keep the same staff and vision for the museum while infusing some of Premier Parks resources to aid in the growth of the museum.

The Cassillys opened City Museum in 1997 in the Washington Avenue Loft District in St. Louis. City Museum, which is privately owned, displays the art of the late Bob Cassilly and dozens of other artists in a setting of reimagined industrial and architectural materials. It drew more than 800,000 visitors in 2017.

Dave Jump, CEO of City Museum, said he is grateful for the creative, hard work of the staff before and after the death of Cassilly.

"That group and the new operators will carry forward the magic that is City Museum," Jump said.

Premier Parks currently operates 10 theme and water parks throughout the United States and Canada.

•premierparks.com

At left, Alexandra and husband Bob Johnson, the retiring OABA president and CEO, with incoming president, Greg Chiecko at the annual OABA banquet. Andy Schoendienst, Showmen's League of America (SLA) president, and Cindy Henning, executive secretary (right) attending the SLA members social in the Gibtown Club. AT/B. DEREK SHAW

Adam Swika (left) stands aside the ticket box for his new four story fun house. Jeffrey Richards, IISF president, and Teresa Rimes, trade show secretary, (right) pause for a moment during the 51st annual show in Gibtown. AT/B. DEREK SHAW

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IISF

Continued from page 28

"Digital Marketing, Online Ticketing and Websites," "H2B Apocalypse – Strategies for Industry Survival," and "Is Your Carnival Ready for a Visit from OSHA?", workshops were great for attendees to catch up on the latest news or refresh themselves on specific subjects.

The IISF, the fundraising arm of the **IISA** (**International Independent Showmen's Association**), reported 137 exhibitors, down slightly from 2018. The cocktail reception fundraiser showed an increase, while the golf tournament (which had additional sponsors) was down slightly. The museum fundraiser showed significant growth and the banquet was on par with the previous years. Three people were inducted into the IISL Hall of Fame during the banquet: **Gloria Myers**, **Myers International Midways**, **Inc.**; **Larry Habeck**, an independent concessionaire; and **Gene Siefker**, founder of **Showmen Supplies, Inc.** Both Myers and Habeck are past presidents of the organization.

Throughout the week, other related organizations held events. The **Showmen's League of America** had five meetings/events including Long Range Planning/Capital Preservation Committee, Scholarship Committee, Nominating Committee, Board of Governors annual meeting and a social at the Gibtown Club.

Also, the **Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA)** held a champagne reception for award inductees and their families mid-week at the IISA Museum. At the end of the week, at the **Sheraton Tampa Brandon** hotel, formal inductions were held at the 54th annual OABA member meeting and chairman's reception. **Michael Wood**, OABA Hall of Fame, owner of **Wood Entertainment Co.** was among the recipients. Also being honored was **Bill Dillard**, the late owner of **Bill Dillard Expositions.** The OABA Industry Pioneer recognition was awarded to **Stephen Swika, Jr.** (deceased), former owner of **S & S Amusements**. Family members accepted in honor of the posthumous recipients.

A special presentation was made to **Bob Johnson**, retiring president and CEO of OABA, for his 24 years of dedicated service to the organization. Incoming President **Greg Chiecko** was then introduced and made a few remarks.

"Everything turned out well. This was one of our better ones. The exhibitors seemed to be happy," said **Theresa Rimes**, trade show secretary, feeling everyone enjoyed a positive experience.

"It's been a good week. We've seen a lot of folks," said **Scott Kunz**, president of **Galaxy Amusement Sales**. Reflecting on the trade show, he summarized, "The weather has been fantastic. We're expecting a good year. This is our Super Bowl. This is what we prepare for all winter, for this one event."

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Game Changers introduced as a new genre of rides

CAVU Designwerks, Framestore partner taking indoor attractions to next level

AT: *Tim Baldwin*
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

Immersive theming, coupled with rider interaction takes a drop ride experience (left) into a different adventure. Spectators below (right) are captivated by coaster riders suspended from above. COURTESY CAVU DESIGNWERKS

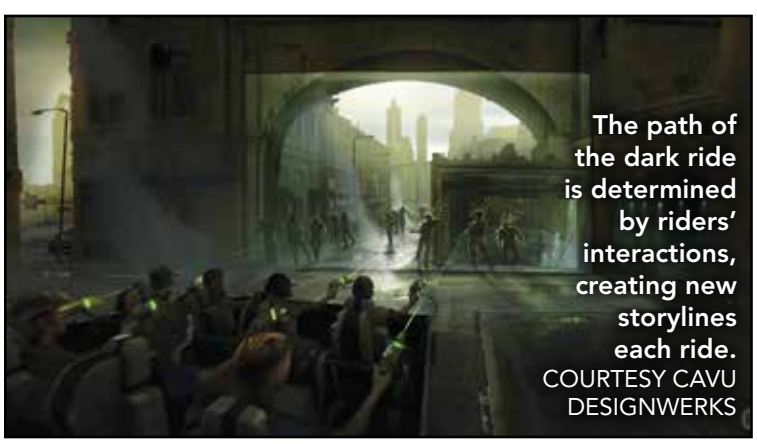
VICTORIA, B.C., Canada — **CAVU Designwerks**, the Canadian-based provider of elaborately themed ride systems has partnered with **Framestore**, a world-renowned company known for visual effects.

"We were working with Framestore on a new attraction opening in China," **Mark Stepanian**, vice president of innovation and engineering, CAVU, told *Amusement Today* at the November IAAPA Expo. "With that collaboration, we started talking about a new breed of theme park attraction — something that has never been seen before that blends creative storytelling with engineering expertise."

From that point, Framestore approached CAVU with about 25 ride concepts, in which CAVU pared down the ideas they felt the most marketable to three ride systems which they have named Game Changers.

Framestore has been an established global visual effects company of 30 years with around 2,000 employees. The company's work boasts five Oscars, including one for *Bladerunner 2049* in 2018. Their work also includes Marvel films. Working aditionally in TV, advertising and music videos, Framstore has also moved into rides in recent years.

"We wanted to push rides further, make an adventure that you are in control of," said **Jason Fox**, creative director.



The path of the dark ride is determined by riders' interactions, creating new storylines each ride. COURTESY CAVU DESIGNWERKS

Taking typical so-called "interactive rides" beyond merely shooting at targets and making the storyline much more immersive is the goal.

Interacting more socially through speech and gesturing takes Game Changers beyond simply shooting. This evolved thought process is being applied to a dark ride system, a tower system and a roller coaster.

Tower Battle pits riders on opposing drop tower rides. Storylines can involve competition against another team or combining forces to attack a common threat. A vast transparent screen between the two towers, physical show sets or a combination of the two engage the riders to interact through buttons, turning mirrors to reflect light, etc. "It is kind of like having a kit of [instruments]," said Jason Fox. "It's very tactile, but it can also be sound based or body movement. There are many ways we can give our clients the opportunity to design their own experience to fit their particular audience."

Tyler Blankenship, mechanical engineer, CAVU, said, "We wanted to make Tower Battle unique. Not only is it a regular drop tower — which is intense for just a moment — but we work with vendors who can make towers go up and down and have a long experience with quick lifts and multiple drops. We can do different configurations — two, three, four or even six towers that might be facing an animatronic in the middle. The whole idea is to create different experiences and themes."

One storyline provided by Framestore was an avalanche theme where two towers work together to climb their way out of a wintery chasm. Castle Battle can offer a four-tower combat to win control of the medieval castle.

Height, capacity and indoor/outdoor placement are options being engineered to make Tower Battle approachable by various parks.

Adventure Machine is a trackless vehicle that carries riders through various scenes, the path of which is determined by the decisions and actions of the guests. For instance, clearing a path to the left will cause the vehicle to veer through the event building that direction.

"Depending upon what you do, the way you go through the ride, riders may have different endings," said **Gavin Fox**, creative director, Framestore. "Everything is aware where you came from, so your story is actually evolving on your journey."

Reaction Coaster is the first roller coaster where riders' interactions directly affect their ride experience. With this system, a suspended roller coaster will pass screens where the interactions via buttons or gestures will affect the vehicle, sound and media. Linear induction motors can cause the vehicle to accelerate, decelerate or move in reverse. Some scenes can take place in enclosed rooms before moving out into main areas where the vehicles soar over other entertainment options (or mall corridors) giving spectators a chance to engage with riders flying above. Blankenship confirms that while primarily LIM powered, there are sections physically driven by gravity.

"Because we are using LIMs, we can still have people going through these fast-paced launches," he said. "We conceived the ride with a shopping mall in mind. You can launch out into those mall areas."

"It brings relevance to having a coaster in an enclosed environment. This brings an excitement level to a coaster that doesn't have the world's biggest drop or most inversions. It's not about that," added Gavin Fox. "This is about 'playing' a roller coaster. We laugh that it is the first roller coaster you can dance to."

With innovation engineering and design under its belt, CAVU's mission is to create the most novel attractions in the industry. Patents are pending for all three attractions. This collaborative alliance with Framestore has started to take rides to the next level by intertwining storytelling with interaction.

"We think these ideas are the most viable, but there are plenty in the bank," said Jason Fox.

•CAVUdw.com

CAVU Designwerks Flying Theatre opens in China

VICTORIA, B.C. — **CAVU Designwerks Inc.** (CAVU) an attractions provider that specializes in delivering media-based attractions to the themed entertainment industry, opened its Flying Theatre in Changsha, China.

Opening in October 2018, the turn-key attraction entitled "Beautiful Hunan" was delivered to the **Macrolink Group** as part of the **Tongguan Kiln International Cultural and Tourism Center** and is the leading attraction there.

During the six-minute journey, The Flying Theatre allows guests to visit locations in the Hunan province. The detailed media appears realistic, fully immersing guests within the region's beauty.

As a turn-key provider, CAVU assembled all aspects of the project, including media, AV equipment, programming and attraction design.

"This was the highest of quality and executed in the shortest period of time, stated Manfred Meier, CEO of **Kraftwerk Living Technologies** who supplied the high-end audio/visual equipment and screen for the attraction.

"We've tried to create a new level of audience engagement and suspension of disbelief, through the combination of a smooth, silent and responsive ride system syncing with media weaving live-action imagery with visual effects sequences," said Arish Fyzee, Creative Director at **PRANA Studios**.

The Tongguan Kiln Ancient Town is a large cultural complex with a total construction area of 1.1 million square meters. Expected to host more than five million tourists each year, the Town has eight museums, five performing centers, three luxury hotels, 18 cultural attractions and four children's amusement parks.

•cavudw.com

Legoland Florida Resort is set to open its largest expansion yet

WINTER HAVEN, Fla. — **Legoland Florida Resort** will open its largest expansion to date, Lego Movie World, later this month. Inspired by *The Lego Movie* and the new *The Lego Movie 2: The Second Part*, the park's expansion will feature the popular movie characters, new rides and attractions and new dining experiences.

Merlin Magic Making, a creative and delivery division of parent company **Merlin Entertainments Group**, re-created Bricksburg along with the authentic city scape from the movie.

While the park's theming and immersion of *The Lego Movie* universe will captivate guests of all ages, the three brand-new rides stay true to the 150-acre Legoland Florida's kid-friendly experience.

"The Masters of Flight ride will be iconic to our park," said **Rex Jackson**, general manager of Legoland Florida. "Unikitty's ride sings and spins with her ever-changing emotions and the Battle of Bricksburg is themed around huge Lego Duplo aliens. With great partners in Warner Bros., we've developed a park that will bring a lot of smiles to children and their families. We're thrilled to be the only location for fans to experience Lego Movie World."

The Masters of Flight will place riders in a triple-decker couch soaring through scenes based on "The Lego Movie."

This ride is the first ever built by **Brogent Technologies** of China. Brogent, which was founded in 2009, specializes in building simulators that feature a row of seats and can be integrated into virtual reality or other worlds. The Masters of Flight features a triple-decker system that rotates as much as 180 degrees during the ride.

Unikitty's Disco Drop (**Zierer**) is a swift drop tower based upon the ruler of the fictitious Lego kingdom.

Battle of Bricksburg (**Mack Rides**) is a water ride that will have riders using water cannons to protect the Lego world from alien invaders. The riders won't be the only ones who can enjoy playing in the water. Outside of the ride will be water cannons for guests to spray and help the riders save the day.

The Lego Movie World also will feature Taco Tuesday Everyday eatery, the Awesome Shop filled with take-home collectables and a space-themed playground structure inspired by Benny's spaceship.

• **legoland.com**

Legoland Florida will open its new expansion — inspired by *The Lego Movie* and the new *The Lego Movie 2: The Second Park* — on March 27. It features new attractions and additional dining experiences. COURTESY LEGOLAND FLORIDA

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Lagotronics Projects celebrates 40 years

Lagotronics Projects is celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2019. Founded in 1979, the Lagotronics team has been helping facilities create memorable experiences.

"During the past 40 years we've completed many attractions and experiences all over the world," said **Mark Beumers**, CEO of Lagotronics Projects. "The magic for all these unforgettable memories starts with a great team to develop and realize these projects. Our people make the difference: they work with sincere passion, fun and are highly knowledgeable. That's what I'm the proudest of!"

The common thread through the company's 40 years of work has been entertaining people. Starting with audio and lighting shows for dance clubs and events, to now creating and installing interactive dark rides and show experiences for a wide-array of amusement industry clients, Lagotronics Projects has become a true innovator.

Its developments in interactive technology have been a fit for the park industry. In recent years, installations of the Farm Fair GameChanger at **Bayern-Park**, the Ghost Hunt Dark Ride at **Lake Compounce** and an AV lighting show at the **Tekzone** in Kuwait have helped keep guests coming through the turnstiles.

Lagotronics founder, Carlo Görtjes, began as a DJ. His appearance on *Uncle John's Disco Show* led to Lagtronics' first AV installations. COURTESY LAGOTRONICS PROJECTS

The company's latest development of its own intellectual property — Farm Fair — has it further poised to meet the growing industry demand for attractions that employ immersion and interactive storytelling.

•lagotronicsprojects.com

Intercard introduces The Edge at FEC Summit

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — A market leader in cashless technology, **Intercard** is a St. Louis-based company with clients in more than 4,000 locations around the globe. The company was founded in 1979 and has additional branches in Europe and Asia.

At the **IAAPA FEC Summit**, Intercard featured its enhanced mobile app collection called The Edge that builds on iService, the industry's first mobile management app. Introduced in 2017, iService makes it simple to track and manage every game at one or more locations. Users can remotely put a game out of service for maintenance, and technicians can use it to track repair information and when the game was placed back into service. All information is automatically updated on the server and in the cloud.

"Operators can get alerts from automated teller systems telling them a machine is low on cards," said **Jason Mitchell**, sales representative. "It prevents downtime."

"The Edge is a suite of apps," said **Bill Allen**, sales manager. "The inventory app will allow an FEC owner to use their cell phone to do their inventory. Scanning bar codes for the merchandise and enter the quantity. That information automatically enters all the data eliminating the need for paper and pencil. It's more efficient and accurate."

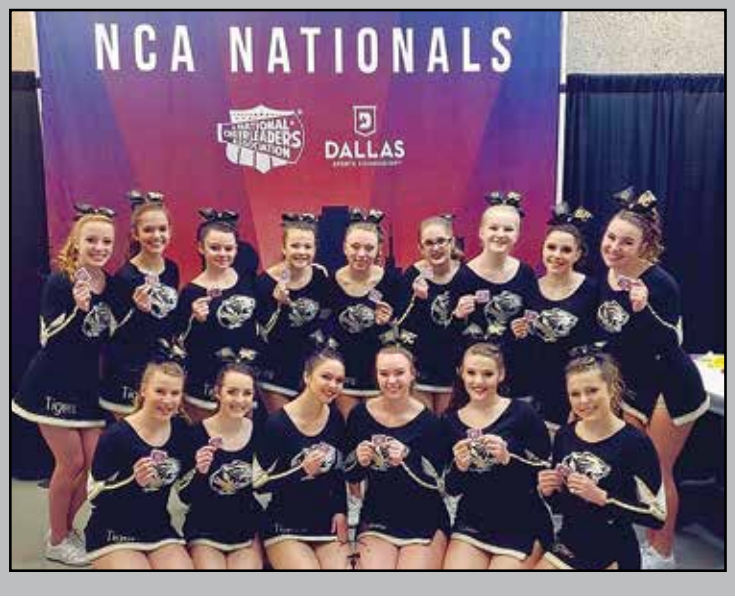
They also pointed out the reduction of labor cost of inventory management and eliminating mistakes.

The final app is the Intercard Upshot. It is a card management app that FEC proprietors can provide to their customers. The app allows the customer to easily add value to multiple game cards directly from a mobile device instead of a trip to the kiosk.

"Guests can scan their card with their phone and automatically know its value," said Mitchell. "There's no more need for employees handling cash. It's all on the phone."

—Tim Baldwin

Cheers for Hannah Knoebel



DALLAS, Texas — Hannah Knoebel (back row, second from right) competed recently with the Southern Columbia Cheer Team at the NCA High School Nationals in Dallas, Texas. The team finished 6th in the nation in the small intermediate game performance category and received a special award in honor of their community service. Hannah is the 16-year-old daughter of Brian and Dawna Knoebel in Elysburg, Pa. COURTESY KNOEBELS

ON THE MOVE

Madrid, Spain-based **Parques Reunidos** has named **José Díaz** as the global leisure park operator's new CEO. The board determined that Díaz was the candidate most capable of optimizing operations, enhancing the company's core business, fostering corporate acquisitions and ensuring an appropriate business model for indoor entertainment centers. Additionally, Parques Reunidos has reinforced its management team: **Elena Cabrero**, the new client and marketing director, has 20-plus years of experience in marketing and customer focus with companies including **Carrefour**, **Pepsico** and **Colgate**; while **Lourdes Álvarez**, the new digital transformation director, has broad experience in multinational environments, including 10 years at **Accenture**, where she led digital projects in the areas of customer experience and process automation.

Diaz

The **Texas Travel Industry Association** (TTIA) has added **Vanessa Fields** to its team as communications coordinator. Born and raised in Katy, Texas, Fields holds a bachelor's degree in marketing from the **University of Texas at San Antonio** and brings to TTIA experience in communications, marketing, event coordination, office management and social media in different industries — including insurance and retirement marketing; a food and wine festival; and, most recently, an engineering consulting company.

Fields

Kevin Fife recently accepted the construction project manager position within the amusement division of Newport, Ky.-based **Baynum Painting, Inc.** Fife, a resident of the Atlanta area, has spent 26 years in the amusement industry — previously serving as director of facilities, maintenance and safety for **Apex Parks Group** in Aliso Viejo, Calif. He is an active member of **NAARSO** (Level II) and **AIMS** (Level II), and he is **OSHA**-10 certified. Baynum is a leading painter of amusement rides and roller coasters worldwide.

Fife

Polin Waterparks of Turkey has assigned **Okyay Halavurt** to the role of regional business development manager. Based in the U.K., Halavurt's primary duties include business development processes, sales processes, project management, service sales and supervision in the region; when needed, he also acts as a project supervisor, completing testing and commissioning procedures after installation. Halavurt holds a civil engineering degree and started with Polin in 2005 as installation supervisor / project engineer. After working in project management for two years, he was appointed to the position of field services manager in 2012.

Halavurt

Leading amusement and arcade game manufacturer **LAI Games** has hired industry veteran **Paul Jennings** as operations manager. Based out of the company's Dallas office, he will oversee and direct the activities of staff engaged in providing product delivery and support services. With over 25 years of experience in out-of-home entertainment, and having worked for some of the industry's largest operators, Jennings will manage the company's rapid growth and streamline operations at its U.S. headquarters.

Jennings

Europa-Park in Rust, Germany, has named **Michael Kreft von Byern** director of Rulantica, the new water recreation extension of the theme park resort that will feature 25 attractions when it opens near the end of this year. Kreft von Byern, a representative of the resort's executive board and a 30-plus-year veteran of Europa-Park working in various management positions, has been instrumental in the project's planning and civic involvement. In addition, he has analyzed numerous water parks around the world and has served as an adviser to the **Mack** family, which owns the resort.

Byern

OBITUARIES

Ralph A. Coppola, founder, ICE, Inc.

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — Ralph Anthony Coppola, founder of Innovative Concepts in Entertainment, Inc. (ICE), and a former American Amusement Machine Assoc. board member, passed away Dec. 28. He was 70.

Born and raised in Orchard Park, Coppola graduated from Canisius High School, where he played basketball and baseball and, most recently, served on the board of trustees. He received a degree in accounting at Canisius College in 1970 and a law degree from the University of Buffalo in 1974.

Coppola

Coppola founded ICE, a coin-operated arcade game company known for the Super Chexx Bubble Hockey game, with partner Jack Willert in 1982. ICE has since invented and developed over 150 different arcade games — from crane machines to Ice Ball, a variation on Skee-Ball — that have sold worldwide out of its factory in Clarence, N.Y.

Coppola was known for his philanthropy and contributions to, among other charities, the Make-a-Wish Foundation and American Heart Association. He is survived by his wife, Suzanne; children Joseph, Marcy, Lori, Walter and Daniel; and seven grandchildren.

Anthony 'Tony' Pero, Ocean Beach Park

NEW LONDON, Conn. — Anthony "Tony" Pero, who managed Ocean Beach Park for several decades, died Jan. 28. He was 97.

According to *The Day* of New London, Pero was born in 1921 and served in World War II as a ship-fitter for the Navy in the South Pacific. In 1946, he began working at Ocean Beach Park as lifeguard captain. He was promoted to activities director, which involved recruiting big-name entertainment.

Pero

An inductee of the New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions Hall of Fame, Pero managed Ocean Beach Park until his 1988 retirement. He is survived by sons Rob, William and Patrick; daughters Judy and Colleen; 12 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Sunkid succeeds Brandauer, becomes mountain coaster provider

Brandauer summer toboggan runs are used in amusement facilities worldwide. Founder Josef Brandauer has opted to transfer the company's popular attraction into the hands of Sunkid, with the mountain coaster added to Sunkidworld's ride catalogue beginning in 2019.
COURTESY SUNKID

Women INFLUENCE

Beverly Burback

Co-owner
Funtastic Traveling Shows
Portland, Ore.

A view from the top...

Co-owners of **Funtastic Shows**, **Beverly Burback** and her husband, **Ron Burback** began in the show business in the early 1970s. Originally partnered with **Robert Bollinger** as the **Burback and Bollinger Shows**, Bollinger retired in 1985 and the Burbacks became the sole owner of the show.

Now, with 50 to 60 full-time employees and as many as 3,000 seasonal employees, the show operates multiple units during the fair and festival season in Oregon and Washington. The show owns approximately 100 rides with its winter quarters located in Portland, Ore., and several permanent rides on the grounds of the **Washington State Fair, Puyallup**.

Accomplishments and affiliations...

- **Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA) Hall of Fame inductee 2016, the second woman to have had that honor. With Ron Burback inducted in 2009, they are the only married couple to both be included in the OABA Hall of Fame.**
- **President of the Northwest Showmen's Club (1998) and chairman of that club's safety seminar.**
- **Recipient of Walker Leroy Award (2003), Irv Houston Award (2005), Royal Rosarian (2016), OABA Redwood Award (2018) and Western Fairs Blue Ribbon Award**

A satisfying, happy industry life

PORTLAND, Ore. — As a child growing up in West Des Moines, Iowa, a young Beverly Slattery Burback fondly remembers the days the carnival came to town.

"It was an exciting time," she said. "We would all go down and watch them set up. Working on a carnival, though, was the furthest thing from my mind until I met Mr. Burback."

That would be Ron Burback whom she met several years later.

Looking back at the many roads traveled, the late nights of setting up, tearing down, counting paper tickets into the morning hours and raising her two daughters and son in the midst of it all, she can definitively say: "This is not an industry for sissies. You have to be ready to stand up for yourself."

Yet she has no regrets.

Burback's life journey might have begun in West Des Moines, but when she was about 15 years old, she, her mother and three younger brothers moved to Beaverton, Ore., after the passing of her father who worked as a brakeman on the Rock Island Railroad.

She met Ron Burback after graduating from high school.

"He had returned from the U.S. Navy and was working at Jantzen Beach Amusement Park in Portland," she said.

The 123-acre Jantzen Amusement Park was located on Hayden Island in the middle of the Columbia River. It operated from 1928 to 1970. There, Ron Burback managed the concessions.

"He talked me into working with him," she said. "It was a good, fun life."

Before too long, she was sharing that fun life with her husband. The two have now been married for 62 years.

After the park closed in 1970, the Burbacks decided to partner with friend Robert Bollinger. They purchased rides and games and began traveling as Burback and Bollinger Shows.

"We traveled a lot at first," Burback said. "We traveled to Memphis to Dallas to North Pole, Alaska."

When Bollinger retired in 1985, the Burbacks bought him out, renamed the show to Funtastic Shows and continued to grow. Being a first generation operation, it was not an easy process.

"We didn't have the privilege of having someone ahead of us," she said. "We had to learn everything ourselves."

While they did make some mistakes, they experienced many more successes.

"Sometimes, I think you just get lucky, just being in the right place at the right time," she said.

Burback has seen many changes in the mobile amusement industry. Technological advances have improved many parts of their operations and made things much more efficient.

"Our (cashless) card system improved everything," she said. "It has made everything easier for us."

Stricter government regulations have led to operational changes, but Burback feels it has been for the betterment of the industry.

Burback has been instrumental in pushing the growth in safety awareness in the industry. When she became the president of the Northwest Showmen's Club (NWSC) in 1998, she was the second woman to hold that position and she also became the chairman of that club's safety seminar, a position she still holds to this day.

The club's safety seminar was founded over 37 years ago and is focused primarily on providing safety and training to carnival employees.

"Safety is a very important part of the industry," Burback stated. She has worked hard in growing the annual safety seminar's attendance.

These days, she and her husband are relying more and more on their children, Tracy Burback Munoz and Ronnie Burback, and "our great staff" to run the show. Her third child, Debbie, lives in Arizona and is not in the business. Two of her three brothers, Larry and Kerry Slattery, were concession managers on the show for many years until they retired in 2016.

After nearly 50 years in the mobile attraction industry, Burback remains active. "I like to say that I now work part-time, but Ron works all the time," she said. "On the weekends, when we could rest and sleep a little later, he wakes up and asks me, 'what are we doing today?'"

Burback continues to spend most of her days at the offices of Funtastic Shows. She continues to travel with her husband to association events to visit with friends and colleagues. She may have stepped back but she hasn't stopped stepping.

—Pam Sherborne

MARKET WATCH

COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 02/12/19	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	33.60	40.60	26.88
Merlin Entertainments Group / Legoland	MERL	LSE	351.00	415.70	304.50
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	52.65	70.82	45.73
Comcast Corp./NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	37.24	40.42	30.43
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	109.20	120.20	97.68
Dubai Parks & Resorts	DXBE:UH	DFM	0.24	0.59	0.23
EPR Properties	EPR	NYSE	73.82	74.35	51.87
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	9010	TYO	3800.00	3890.00	2582.00
Haichang Holdings Ltd.	HK:2255	SEHK	1.62	2.30	1.18
Leofoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	6.29	7.77	5.45
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	28.87	37.12	21.61
Parques Reunidos Servicios Centrales S.A.	ES:PQR	MCE	10.46	15.18	9.84
NEW LISTING Royal Carribean Cruises, Ltd.	RCL	NYSE	116.29	133.60	89.48
Sansei Technologies, Inc.	JP:6357	TYO	1840.00	2160.00	1117.00
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	25.96	32.47	13.87
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	63.27	73.38	49.79
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	648.00	704.00	590.00
Village Roadshow	AU:VRL	ASX	3.16	3.65	1.73

STOCK PRICES ABOVE ARE GENERALLY QUOTED IN THE FOREIGN CURRENCY IN WHICH THE COMPANY IS LOCATED

Worldwide Markets: ASX, Australian Securities Exchange; **CSE**, Copenhagen Stock Exchange; **LSE**, London Stock Exchange; **NYSE**, New York Stock Exchange; **NASDAQ**, National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations; **SEHK**, Hong Kong Stock Exchange; **SZSE**, Shenzhen Stock Exchange; **TSEC**, Taiwan Stock Excange, Corp.; **TYO/TSE**, Tokyo Stock Exchange

—SOURCES: Bloomberg.com; Wall Street Journal

DIESEL PRICES

Region (U.S)	As of 02/11/19	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	$3.031	-$0.080
Midwest	$2.849	-$0.171
Gulf Coast	$2.776	-$0.075
Mountain	$2.87	-$0.102
West Coast	$3.084	-$0.023
California	$3.714	$0.025

CURRENCY

On 02/12/19 $1 USD =	
0.8851	EURO
0.7766	GBP (British Pound)
110.50	JPY (Japanese Yen)
1.0060	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.4110	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.3266	CAD (Canadian Dollar)

BUSINESS WATCH

Bear Grylls attraction adds Accesso systems

ORLANDO — **Accesso Technology Group, PLC**, a leading technology solutions provider for the leisure, entertainment and cultural markets, is expanding its partnership with **Merlin Entertainments** with the implementation of ticketing, queuing and guest experience solutions at **The Bear Grylls Adventure** in Birmingham, England. From ticketing and reservations to meal and gift shop purchases, Accesso's Passport ticketing suite, LoQueue queuing suite and The Experience Engine solution will help create an enhanced immersive experience for visitors. The attraction utilizes Accesso's Prism wearable device, called BearTag, which is loaded with each guest's custom itinerary and enables secure, cashless payments for meals and merchandise. Opened last fall, The Bear Grylls Adventure features a five-story high ropes course and other challenges designed to replicate the exploits of the noted adventurer / survivalist Grylls, as seen on his television shows *Born Survivor* and *Man vs. Wild*.

Dolly Parton dinner theater operation grows

PIGEON FORGE, Tenn. — **World Choice Investments, LLC**, the operating partner of **Dolly Parton**'s dinner theaters, has expanded its dinner theater holdings to seven with the purchase of three theaters and a restaurant from **David Fee** and **Jim Hedrick**'s **Fee Hedrick Entertainment** in Pigeon Forge. Parton's enterprise now operates shows in Branson, Mo., and Myrtle Beach, S.C., with a total of five theater attractions in Pigeon Forge (the acquisition includes **Comedy Barn**, **Hatfield & McCoy** and **Smoky Mountain Opry**). "David, Jim and their team have done a great job with these shows through the years and, for now, we don't plan to change anything," Parton said. "They are fun family entertainment, and that is the business I'm in." Founded in 1988, World Choice Investments has been doing business as **Dolly Parton's Stampede Dinner Attraction** in Pigeon Forge and Branson, and **Pirates Voyage Dinner & Show** in Myrtle Beach.

Gold Medal opens location in Allentown, Pa.

CINCINNATI — Concession food and equipment supplier **Gold Medal Products Co.** has introduced a branch location in Allentown, Pa. Called **Gold Medal — Mid-Atlantic**, the new branch (formerly operated as **Kloss Fun Foods**) will serve as an expert resource for concessions in the region — showcasing a variety of product lines including popcorn poppers, cotton candy makers, **Sno-Kone** machines, hot dog grills, fryers and more. "Gold Medal is excited to be in Allentown," said **Pete Bakala**, Gold Medal's vice president of branch operations and sales. "Not only does it provide a valuable regional presence, it is an outstanding local community where we look forward to building and growing relationships." The addition of the Mid-Atlantic location brings to 16 the number of Gold Medal branch locations throughout the U.S. for the privately held company, which was established in 1931.

Silver Dollar City, Toverland set records in '18

BRANSON, Mo., and SEVENUM, Netherlands — Theme parks on both sides of the Atlantic set attendance records in 2018. **Silver Dollar City**'s $26 million investment in Time Traveler, billed as the world's fastest, steepest and tallest spinning coaster, together with the related media coverage, helped spur Branson's 1880s-style theme park to a total of 2,184,000 visitors — the highest number in its 59-year history. In the Netherlands, Toverland's visitor tally was about 812,000, representing a 19 percent increase over the park's 2017 total. The growth at the 17-year-old Dutch attraction was attributed to its debut last summer of a new entrance called Port Laguna and a new themed area named Avalon.

IAAPA FEC Summit engages operators at sold out three-day event

AT: *Tim Baldwin*
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

The 7th Annual IAAPA FEC Summit gathered for a group photo outside of the Hyatt Regency Lost Pines Resort. COURTESY CHAD BAUMER

LOST PINES, Texas — Attendees from 35 states and nine countries arrived on the outskirts of Austin, Texas, for the 7th annual IAAPA FEC Summit. Family entertainment centers make up the largest portion of IAAPA facility members, and many traveled to the **Hyatt Regency Lost Pines Resort** on Jan. 27-29. "IAAPA has more than 1,000 FECs in 61 countries," Chairman of the Board **David Rosenberg** told gathered members. Speaking to the importance of participating in the conference, he said, "We connect and, more importantly, learn from each other."

After arriving to the remote resort, the sold-out crowd of 200-plus operators and additional sponsors and vendors kicked up their heels in an opening night reception lightheartedly themed to wacky western wear. The well-received social set off three days of networking.

A full schedule the next day began with a keynote speech from **Jeff Butler**, millennial generation expert. His focus was on what it takes to attract and engage millennials. A customer service panel consisting of **Michael Browning**, **Urban Air Adventure Park**; **Jeremy Hoyum**, **Jakes Unlimited**; **Lee Pitts**, **Andretti Indoor Karting;** and **Barry Zelickson**, **Big Thrill Factory** followed. During the session, the panel shared their views on employee motivation, addressing cell phone policies and training to make guest experiences purposeful and impactful. Browning shared an internal training video that moved the entire audience.

The afternoon activities were held at **Austin's Park n' Pizza**. Once transported to the facility, attendees encountered a wide range of sessions that included safety inspections, group sales and gaming. A particularly impressive food presentation wowed many audience members with creative uses for three common food items producing imaginative and diverse dishes.

Attendees could experience many activities at Austin's Park n' Pizza. AT/TIM BALDWIN

A customer service panel — (l-r) moderator Christine Buhr, Lee Pitts, Barry Zelickson, Jeremy Hoyum and Michael Browning — fielded questions from the audience. AT/TIM BALDWIN

The evening at the FEC allowed for numerous networking opportunities in a twisted golf tournament, Texas dinner and a fun reception that included llamas delivering beer. [Editor's note: Don't ask. Keep Austin Weird.]

The second day of sessions included an IAAPA update from **John Hallenbeck**, VP, North American operations, IAAPA. Hallenbeck explained and detailed the nuances to the organization's new logo and branding, as well as emphasizing the benefits of being an IAAPA member.

Education sessions included "How to Think Like a Banker," helping to guide attendees through financial questions and investments that might exist in their future. "How Not to Waste Money on Digital Marketing" found speaker **Matt Banker** offering advice on how to make websites more productive in initiating action and sales. Several facilities represented by attendees were willing to have their own web pages critiqued by the creative strategist.

The final presenter was **Don Williams**, who brought the challenge "Change Your Mind, Change Your Business, Change Your Life." The motivational speaker encouraged members to examine how others see them and never to lose sight of gratitude. "Knowledge without action is meaningless. Change requires action," he told the audience. Williams offered specific techniques to help motivate employees with short moments of gratitude. He also encouraged owners and managers to be open to feedback.

Festivities concluded the summit with a networking reception and a closing night neon party.

Leslie Hutcheson (far right) judges best western wear at the opening night social. AT/TIM BALDWIN

The diverse and well-orchestrated program led by IAAPA's **Scott Fais** and **Leslie Hutcheson** appeared to resonate with operators who had made the trip.

Suzie and Greg Razmus, owners of **Tri County Cineplex** (Corbin, Ky.) were looking to expand. "This was our first summit, and I think the networking opportunities are awesome," said Suzie. "We've met people from all over the world and each has brought something to the table. We know the theater business very well, but we don't know the FEC business. The different events have all been helpful."

"Some things weren't on my radar, but going into the breakout sessions, they are now on my radar," added husband Greg. "I'm now thinking of what we might be needing down the road."

•iaapa.org

At Austin's Park n' Pizza, a golf tournament (left) challenged attendees by substituting putters with other objects at each hole. Drew Tewksbury (right) directed an inspection workshop to train staff members to be watchful. AT/TIM BALDWIN

Christine Buhr and Kim Valadez welcomed everyone to the opening night reception with bandanas (left). Keynote speaker Jeff Butler (right) discussed engaging millennials. AT/TIM BALDWIN

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SAFETY, MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS

▸ AIMS Safety Seminar photo recap — page 43 / ASTM honors Jared Krupa — page 45

Surge protection preparation reduces maintenance costs, improves safety

Surge filter protection (insets) can provided reduced maintenance. It has created substantial savings for The Main Event facilities such as its Lewisville and Plano, Texas locations (above).
COURTESY SAVE ELECTRONICS

Whether one is an operator of an amusement park, water park or family entertainment center, experiencing the loss of power is an unwelcome obstacle.

Fresh off a speaking engagement at the **AIMS** Safety Seminar and attendance at the **IAAPA** FEC Summit, **Tim Boyd**, president of **SAVE Electronics**, feels raising the awareness of proper surge protection can be vital to most owners and operators.

"People don't know that 80 percent of surges are generated internally," Boyd told *Amusement Today*. "The [AIMS session] was a very informative class. It's important to know how transient surges are generated, how these surges affect the performance and reliability of all connected equipment, the differences in surge filter protection technology and where facilities can save money by having it (and how quickly these savings will generate a return on investment)."

Boyd explained that surges are caused by a variety of factors. "Everything being fed into that breaker panel is being fed back to everything else on that panel," he said.

"Regarding rides and waterslides, as every pump motor cycles within a facility, these same loads generate energy back on the breaker panel causing other loads to get knocked out. That's where surge filter protection comes into play," he said. "The investment to protect a complete water or amusement park is typically a fraction of the cost of one piece of equipment."

In addition, surges can reduce the lifespan of LED lights because there are sensitive electronic drivers in each fixture. The problem isn't within the LED bulb itself. Boyd stated that the right LED can be beneficial and save energy costs, pointing out that certain types of LEDs have the ability to dim to two percent. He added that many types can't go below 10 percent without flickering. This is particularly problematic in filming if the lighting isn't video compliant. Having the right protection technology can extend LED fixture life by greater than 50 percent while improving consistent lumen output.

Boyd illustrates potential savings with a customer situation he helped solve. A Florida hospital had turned down a recommended surge filter protection as they felt the first cost of $27,000 was too high. He admits people look at first costs going in, without seeing what the life-cycle saving can be with reliable power. Knowing a new facility would have numerous VFDs, PLCs, LED lighting and controllers with medical equipment throughout the facility, repairs would be costly. After opting for less expensive protection going in ($18,000), the hospital spent more than $200,000 in repairs in the first 18 months of operations. After realizing their misstep, hospital management went back to the original surge filtering proposal and the net result was they spent a total of $7,000 over the next five years in total electrical operational costs. It was a 96 percent savings with the right protection.

Facilities that unknowingly invest in off-the-shelf surge protection solutions, find that the unfiltered and/or reduced-mode surge protection they have chosen typically only guards against high voltage scenarios such as lightning and power transformer incidents.

"For the past 20-years we've used **Total Protection Solutions**," said Boyd. "They are the best on the market. They protect **FedEx**'s Worldwide Data Center which had up to a 20 percent latency going in. After TPS surge filters were installed throughout that facility, latency was reduced to zero. FedEx Engineering had equated latency to millions of dollars lost. They recouped their ROI in months, not years."

For large businesses, even a few minutes in operational disruption can cost millions in lost information and revenue, customer inconvenience, and in cases of systems being interrupted, customer and employee safety may be compromised.

SAVE Electronics continues to do work with **Main Event**, **Disney** and **Universal**.

When asked when is the right time to upgrade, Boyd said, "Anytime. Reducing downtime is the most important priority in operating any facility. The cost of downtime is almost always many times the cost associated with electrical maintenance and equipment repair."

He pointed out that exterior lighting, such as parking lot site lighting can reap maintenance benefits as well. "Parking lots, rides, restaurants — anything with electricity is susceptible to surges," said Boyd. "What theme park owners should know is if they have automation systems and controls, VFDs, pumps, motors and high efficiency lighting, an expensive restaurant or a lot of lights in their lots, this will protect all facets of their company."

His simple takeaway is that surge filter suppression products protect equipment and facilities from costly repairs due to electrical problems. If unprotected, sensitive electronic devices are subject to damage from transient events, and over time, these small spikes erode electronic circuit connections, making them unstable and subject to failure.

"When your equipment is working, downtime is minimized, your staff is productive, and your company is reaping huge benefits. In facilities where productivity is routinely measured, significant increases can be expected," said Boyd.

—Tim Baldwin

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2019 NAARSO safety forum sets new attendance record

New ropes course safety class proves successful

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MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. — The **National Association of Amusement Ride Safety Officials (NAARSO)** 32nd annual Safety Forum, held Jan. 27-Feb. 2, drew 450 attendees this year, setting a new record attendance.

"We were very pleased," said **Lenny Cavalier**, executive director. "We had 400 students and the balance of the attendance included instructors and administration. Of the attendees, we had a large influx of new attendees."

The forum was held at the Kingston Resort Hotel. Cavalier said they sold out all the rooms they had blocked out for the event.

"The hotel had extra rooms so we were able to book out more," he said.

The hands-on portion of the event, held on Wednesday, Jan. 30, was at **Broadway at the Beach**. Cavalier said they had a very good day there.

"They were very welcoming," he said. "We were able to break up into 15 different groups there to allow for fewer students in each group."

New this year was a special three-hour class on ropes courses.

"That seemed to take off," said Cavalier.

The week began on Sunday with registration, the annual meeting, orientation and the opening reception.

Monday and Tuesday were filled with class sessions. Students were allowed to select their own tracks of instruction depending on their needs. There was a general track and an operations track.

The general track was broken into two groups, primary and secondary. Those taking the secondary track could also participate in the operations classes.

Classes offered during the first two days included accessibility, rigging inspections, components/inspection points, facility inspections, corrosion analysis, flumes and rafts, slides and features inspections, facility inspections, hydraulic locking restraint systems and patron containment.

Elective classes were offered on Thursday, Feb. 1. Some of the elective topics included wooden coasters, steel coasters, responding to emergencies, welding 360, developing an inspection program, aerial tramways, non-destructive testing, passenger restraints and the hacking of ride control systems.

Operations Certifications testing was set for Thursday evening with all other NAARSO testing held Friday afternoon, Feb. 2, following a morning of review.

Four levels of inspection certification and two levels of operations certificates were offered during the event.

AIMS certification testing was offered Tuesday evening.

The closing dinner was held Friday evening.

Next year's annual safety forum will be back in Myrtle Beach.

NAARSO is a non-profit organization that provides resources for amusement industry professionals dedicated to the safety of the industry and its patrons. Its safety seminar offers a tailored curriculum for each attendee depending on skill level and need.

•naarso.com

NSPF and APSP consolidate

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — The **National Swimming Pool Foundation (NSPF)** and the **Association of Pool & Spa Professionals (APSP)** announced that the organizations will unify to form **the Pool & Hot Tub Alliance**. The unification was approved by the boards of directors of both organizations on January 18 and 19, respectively, and work is currently underway to establish and formalize governance, structure, and operations. The unified organization is scheduled to officially begin operations on April 1.

The new organization will operate with The Pool & Hot Tub Alliance as the umbrella, leading industrywide advocacy, alliances and promotions. Trade and foundation activities will be conducted separately for procedural and legal purposes, under the banners of **The Pool & Hot Tub Professionals Association**, and **The Pool & Hot Tub Foundation**, respectively.

•apsp.org
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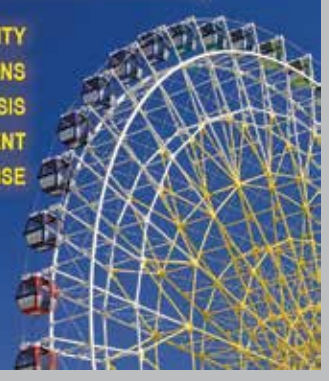

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AIMS Int'l adds Bromilow to Board of Directors

During the AIMS Maintenance and Safety Conference held recently in Galveston, Texas, the AIMS International Board of Directors voted to add Mobaro, Inc.'s David Bromilow onto the AIMS Board. "It is a huge privilege," said Bromilow," director of parks and attractions for Mobaro. "AIMS organization and the programs it delivers are at the very heart of [safety] education within our industry." Bromilow has been involved with AIMS on-and-off as a student since 1984 and, more recently, as an instructor. He is pictured here at the recent AIMS Maintenance and Safety Conference alongside Patrick Hoffman (right), former president of AIMS. COURTESY MOBARO, INC.

Nearly 600 educators attend SEEC

HOUSTON, Texas – **Space Center Houston** welcomed more than 580 educators from seven countries, 39 states, Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C. for hands-on learning experiences with rocket scientists, astronauts and renowned instructors at the 25th Space Exploration Educators Conference (SEEC), Feb. 7-9.

"We're connecting teachers from around the globe with authentic learning experiences," said **Daniel Newmyer**, vice president of education for the nonprofit. "Teachers are vital to preparing the next generation of explorers to walk on Mars."

This year, the conference provided interactive sessions co-presented by **NASA** experts and educators. Teachers learned about the latest research happening at **NASA Johnson Space Center**, received ready-to-implement classroom activities and valuable networking opportunities with their colleagues, while earning up to 24 hours of continuing education credit.

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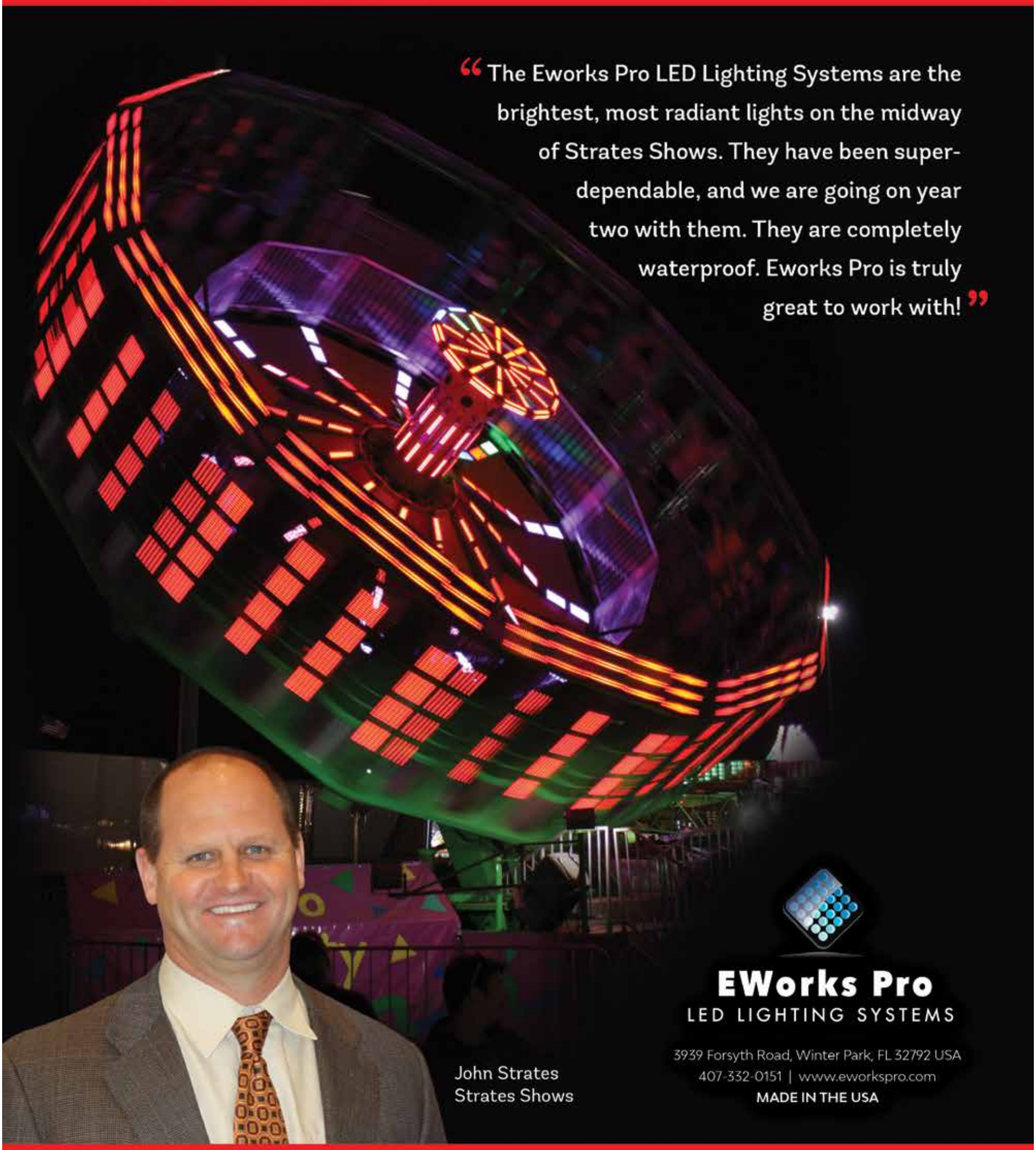
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AIMS Safety Seminar exhibitors show off services and products

Giulia Battistello, business development, sales manager assistant, and Marco Savegnago, engineering, sales, Auxel, are excited about the growth of their business in the U.S.

Dale Polley, left, and Brian Sprague, Cryogenic Plastics Inc. (CPI), Kyle, Texas, a manufacturer of synthetic resins, plastics materials, and nonvulcanizable elastomers, spent time talking to AIMS seminar attendees about their products.

Karen Fox, business development manager, Iriss, Bradenton, Fla., showed off the company's products. Iriss focuses on infrared windows, online monitoring devices and ultrasound test equipment technology.

David Welsh, Martin & Vleminckx (MVR), wanted to make sure AIMS attendees knew that MVR specializes in construction and installation of rides of all sizes for parks around the world.

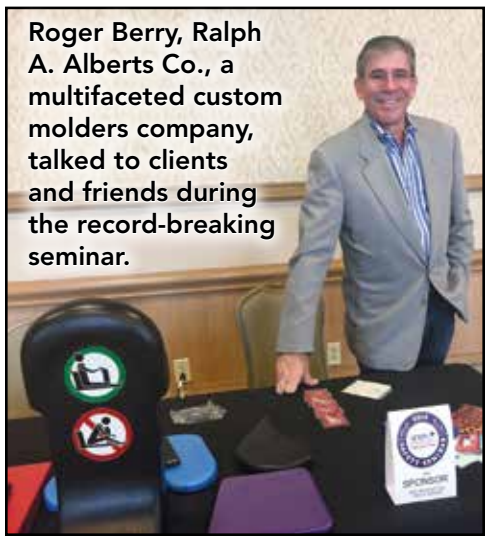
Wayne Miller, Zebec Products, Fairfield, Ohio, was on hand showing off the company's water park tubes, rafts and foam slide mats at the 2019 AIMS seminar.

Scott Helce represented After Sales and Services, Whitewater West Industries. After Sales and Services is dedicated to helping customers maximize the life spans of their water parks and water park features.

Jaime Maw, customer service manager, and Sean Halligan, both with S&S Sansei Technologies, North Logan, Utah, a design and engineering manufacturing company of amusement rides and roller coasters, were on hand at the AIMS Safety Seminar.

Bill Castle, business development manager, Applied Technical Services (ATS), Marietta, Ga., represented ATS at the AIMS Safety Seminar. ATS is a premier provider of high-quality consulting engineering, testing, and inspection services.

ALL PHOTOS AT/PAM SHERBORNE

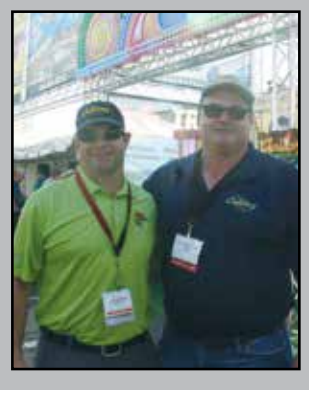


Roger Berry, Ralph A. Alberts Co., a multifaceted custom molders company, talked to clients and friends during the record-breaking seminar.

Safety on display at 50th annual IISF Trade Show

As Urethane Assoc., Inc. says, "Let us keep you rolling." The company sells new and retreaded wheels for numerous rides. On hand were Tony Tidwell (left) and Terry Tyler, president.
AT/B. DEREK SHAW

American Earth Anchors offers lightweight, reusable anchors. The largest is an alternative to concrete footings. Cy Henry, president and Corinne Lacey, VP sales were handling booth activities.
AT/B. DEREK SHAW



Todd Kunz, vice president (left), and Scott Kunz, president of Galaxy Amusement Sales displayed a variety of specialty items. Galaxy offers seasonal supply trucks.
AT/B. DEREK SHAW

Jared Krupa honored by ASTM Int'l

Jared Krupa

W. CONSHOHOCKEN, Pa. — **ASTM International**'s committee on amusement rides and devices honored **Jared Krupa** — principal engineer with **K2 Engineering and Structural Design, LLC** in Reno, Nevada, USA, — with their Award of Appreciation.

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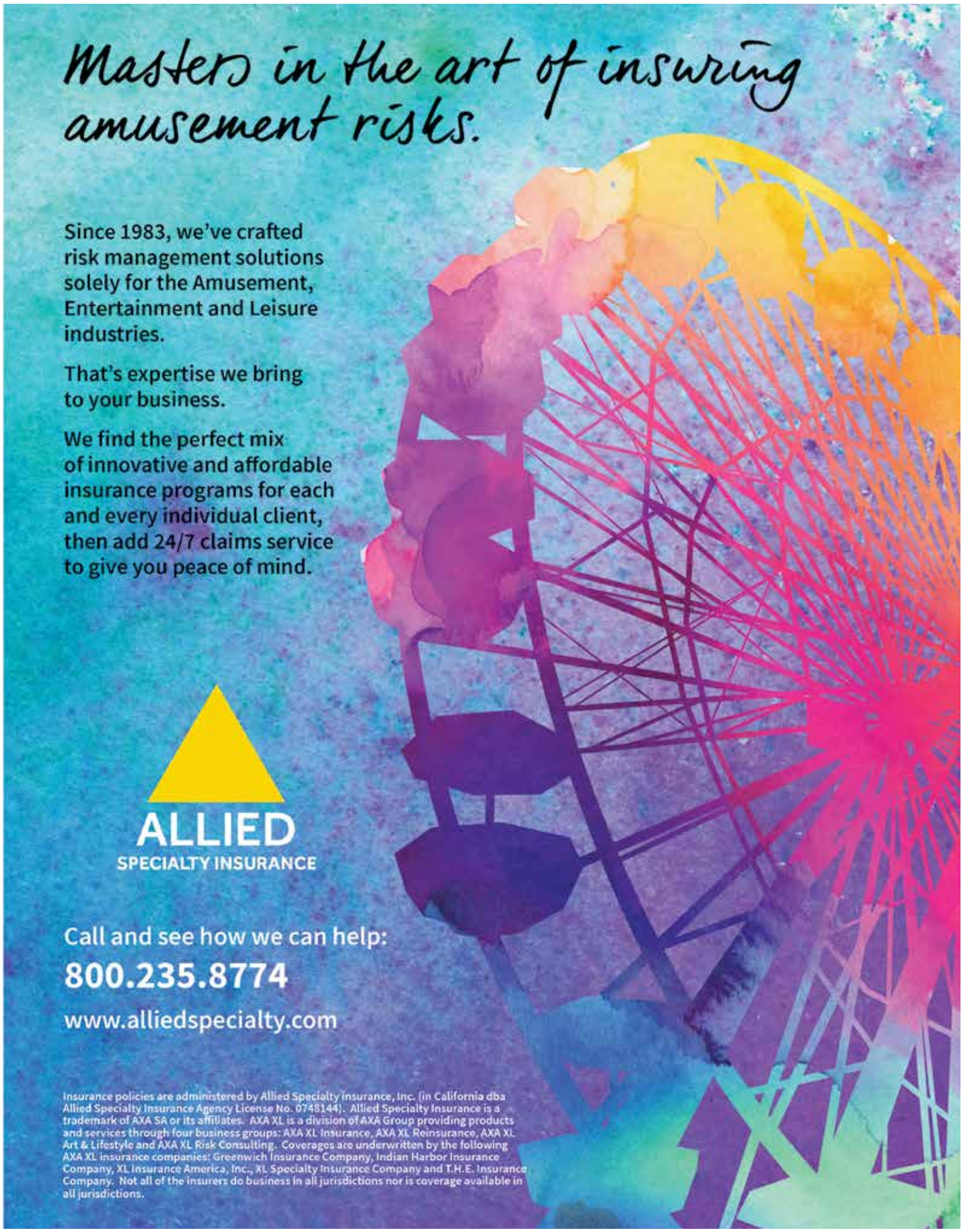
An ASTM member since 2013, Krupa was honored for his hard work and dedication in leading a task group which revised practices for aerial adventure courses.

Krupa has served as principal engineer with K2 Engineering and Structural Design, LLC since 2004. He holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of Nevada, Reno.

Krupa is a member of the **American Society of Civil Engineers**, **International Code Council, American Welding Society**, **American Institute of Steel Construction**, **National Association of Amusement Ride Safety Officials**, **National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying**, and **National Design Specifications for Wood Construction**.

•astm.org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Quarterly Ride Safety Advisory Board meeting provides guidance

AT: *B. Derek Shaw*
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

HARRISBURG, Pa. – Pennsylvania's amusement ride safety program is designed to ensure all rides operating within the state meet its requirements. **Pennsylvania Amusement Ride Safety Advisory Board** — made up of industry experts, concerned citizens, and a certified engineer — helps to accomplish this task.

Walt Remmert, director of the **Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture**'s Bureau of Ride & Measurement Standards, started the board's winter quarterly meeting, held on Jan. 23, by complimenting the panel and its duties. "There is nothing quite like this [advisory board] in the Commonwealth. It's all about safety," he said.

Gary Chubb, senior maintenance director of facilities and safety at **Hersheypark** remarked in the new business portion of the meeting about upcoming changes to the Xtreme Cup Challenge, an interactive dark ride. Starting this season, it will be known as Reese's Cupfusion. The ride path will essentially be the same, aside from the elimination of the 15-foot-high bunny hops near the end of the ride. The current animatronics are also being replaced with projection systems. Original ride manufacturer, **Sally Corp.** and their partner, **EOS** Spresian, Italy, are completing the conversion. Chubb indicated all changes comply with **ASTM** and Pennsylvania ride standards.

Brian and **Rick Knoebel** represented **Knoebels Amusement Resort** at the meeting, spoke on two changes for the upcoming season. Their **Dartron Industries** Downdraft ride was traded in for a new **Battech Enterprises** Downdraft model.

In a deal brokered by **Rides-4-U, Inc.,** the park is also installing a new **SBF-Visa Group** Mini Break-Dance they are calling Tumbling Timbers. Located where Over the Top previously stood, the ride will use cars which appear to look like hollowed out trees. The Board approved the new ride for Knoebels along with its trailer mount version.

Planning to install adventure courses in the former St. Mary Magdalene church in Homestead, **Dragon's Den Pittsburgh** is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Their goal is to create a transformative learning experience for children. Working with **Providence Engineering**, they've planned two rope courses: one that is three feet off the ground for younger children and a 17-foot-high version for teenagers and adults. Both have weight limits of 130 and 285 pounds respectively.

Finally, **DiEmidio Construction**, Aston, Pa., presented on a Bouldering Rock Wall and Ninja Warrior Course they are designing for **Kidz World Family Fun Center** in Aston, Pa.

There was discussion on taking a look at the Pennsylvania Ride Safety Inspection Act which was established in 1984. The original statute focused on rides in parks, carnivals and fairs. Today, there are additional amusement experiences that come into the mix (e.g. inflatables, extreme sports, trampoline parks and other non-traditional activities). While no timetable has been set and there is no pressure to modify what is on the books, the board is going to examine if changes are needed.

Under public comments, Gary Chubb talked about the 2019 **Parks and Carnival Education** (PACE) ride safety seminar occurring October 28-30 in the Altoona area, which will feature a hands-on day at **DelGrosso's Park & Laguna Splash**. Chubb serves as the ride safety seminar coordinator.

The Pennsylvania Ride Safety Advisory Board meetings will reconvene three more times in 2019: April 16, August 20 and October 16. All meetings will start at 10 am in room 309 at the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Building in Harrisburg.

•agriculture.pa.gov

ERRATUM

A recap story on the 25th semi-annual Pa. Ride Safety Seminar appearing in the January issue of *Amusement Today* suggested that the Pennsylvania Dept. of Agriculture trains hundreds of ride inspectors. It should be clarified that the training is handled by a third party, Slaggert Risk Management. *AT* regrets the error.

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